[gantz_waitingroom]

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フリージア

11

松本次郎

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雑誌 45904-38　小学館

反敵討ち法を掲げるカリスマ・田中慶太。その元恋人であるYO-KOに悲劇が襲いかかる。一方、執行代理人事務所のヒグチは、田中に執行法を適用すべく証言集めに奔走し…？

IKKI COMIX

小学館

IKKI438

IKKICOMIX

フリージア

松本次郎 11

IKKICOMIX

フリージア⑪　松本次郎……目次

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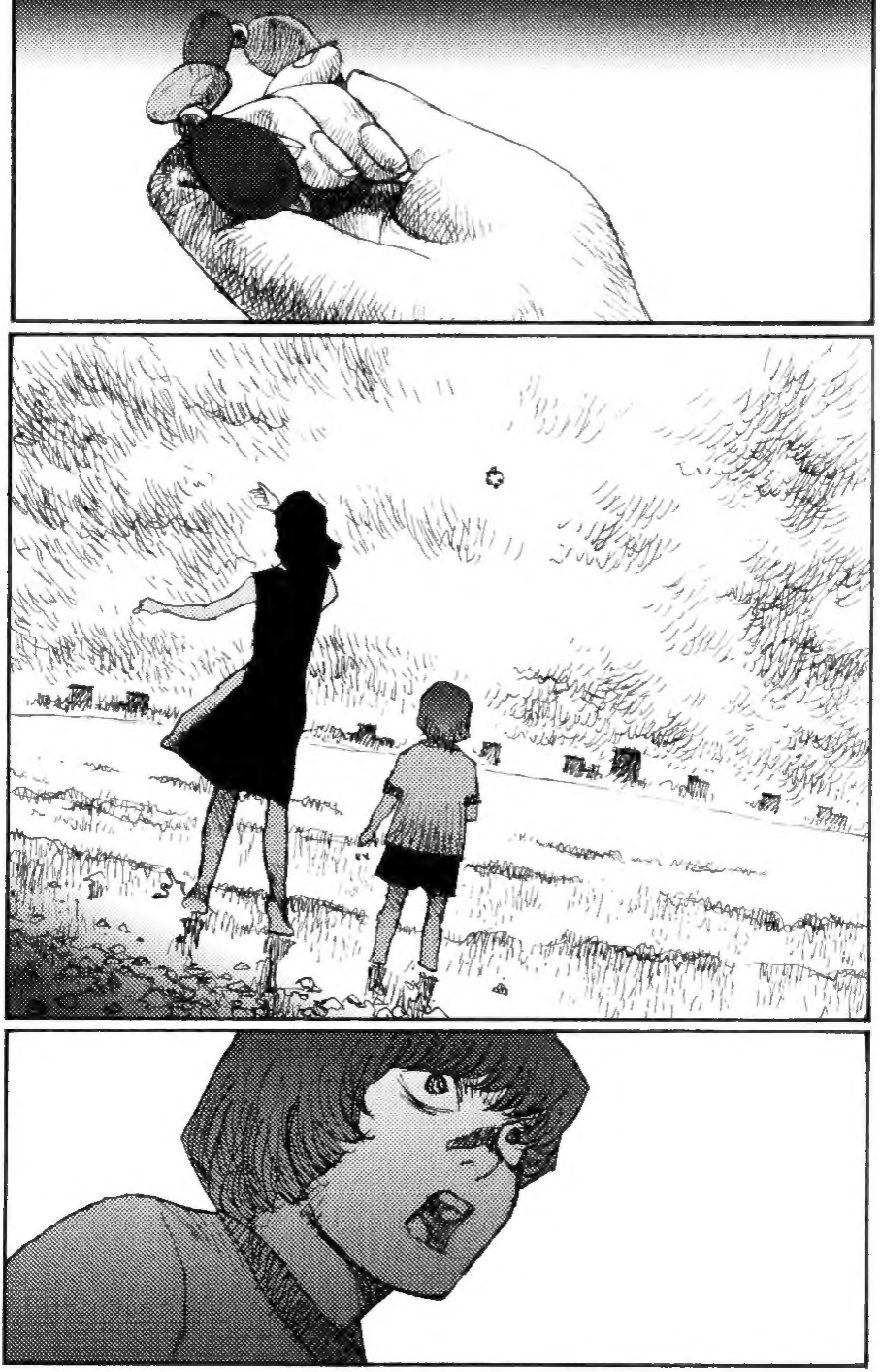
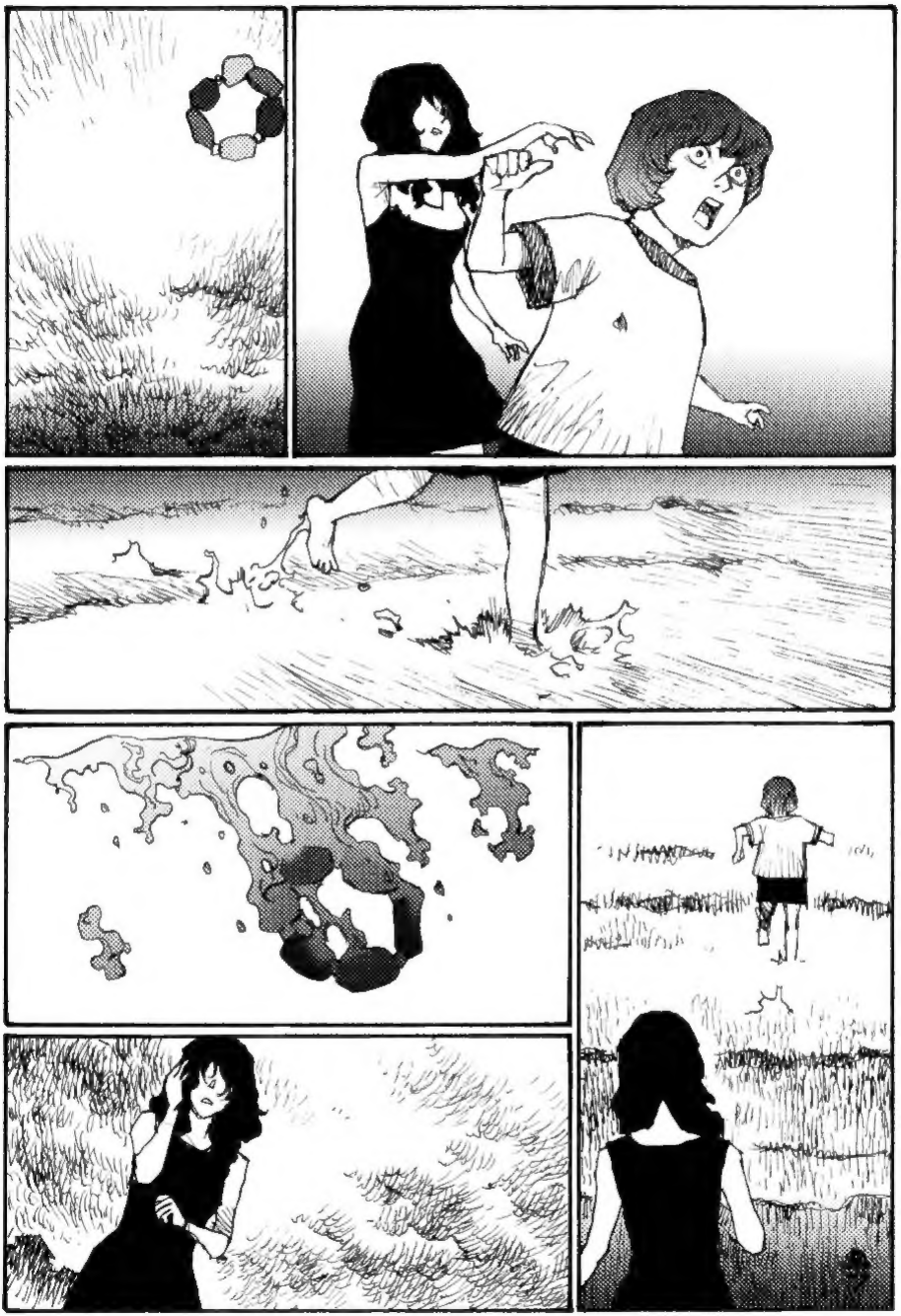
※この作品はフィクションです。実在の人物・団体・事件などには、一切関係ありません。

Chapter 67: Gilded Settlement

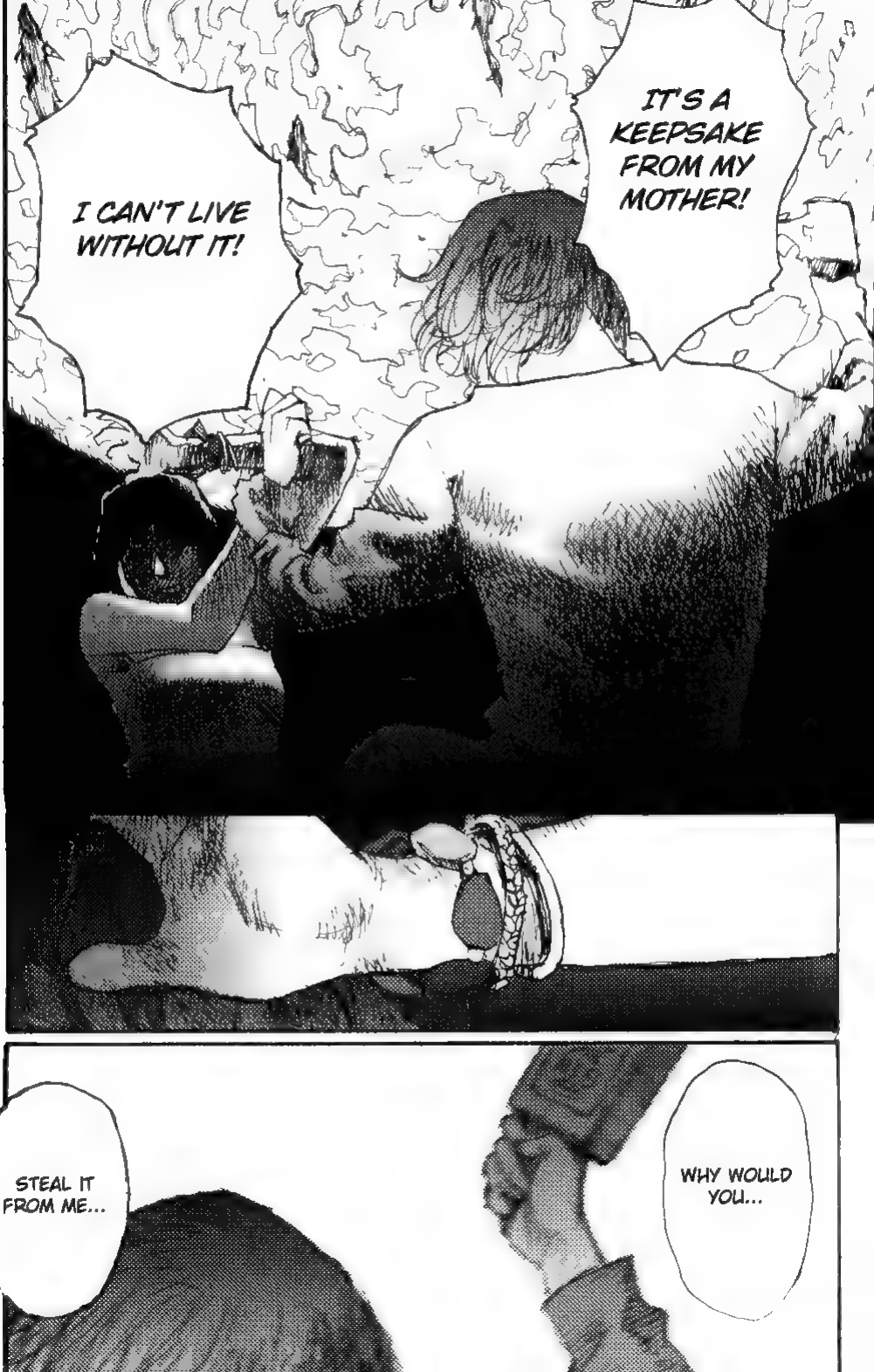
I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.
YOU WANT IT THAT MUCH?
HERE.





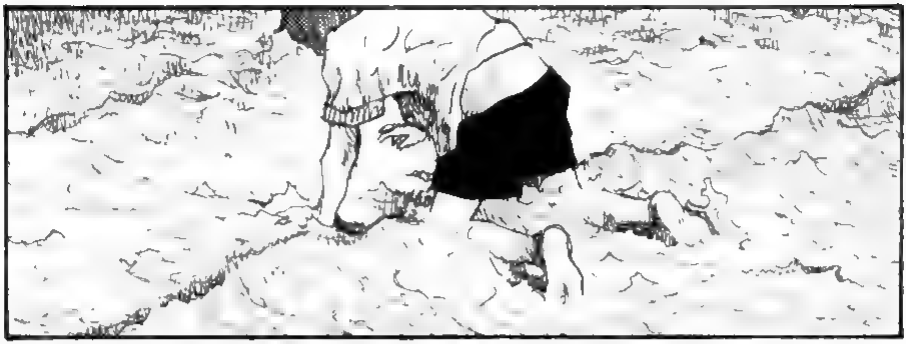
HEY...!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?
KEI-KUN...!

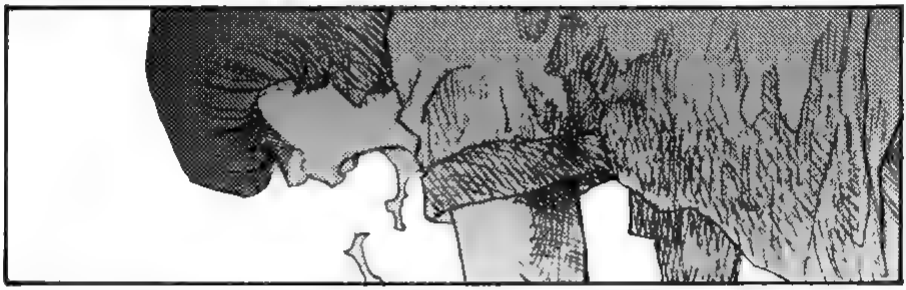
ISN'T IT PRETTY?
I GOT IT FROM MY MOM WHEN WE WENT TO THE BEACH.
HEY... LET ME SEE IT.
THAT BRACELET I ALWAYS WEAR!
SHIT! WHERE'D IT GO!?


I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT!
IT'S A KEEPSAKE FROM MY MOTHER!
STEAL IT FROM ME...
WHY WOULD YOU...

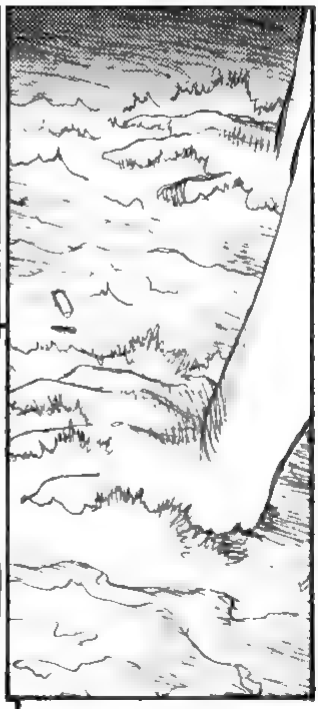
PLEASE, KEI-KUN!
COME BACK!
!
KEI-KUN!

MOM...





I LOST IT.
I'M SORRY, MOM.



BUT I COULDN'T... I'M SORRY...

I REALLY TRIED MY BEST.
I'M NOT LYING.

I TRIED, BUT I COULDN'T FIND IT...

DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE... MOM.
SO PLEASE,
WHAT ARE YOU SO SORRY FOR?

THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY. FOR YOU, OR YOUR MOTHER...
NO ONE'S BLAMING YOU, KEI-KUN.

I HAD IT THIS WHOLE TIME.
THANK GOD...

AH-CHOO!
DAMN IT'S GETTING CHOPPY AGAIN.
YOU GOTTA BE CRAZY GOING INTO THE OCEAN ON A COLD DAY LIKE THIS.
MAN, WHAT IS UP WITH YOU YOUNG PEOPLE THESE DAYS.
HEH-HEH, WE HAD A LITTLE INCIDENT...
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR LENDING US CLOTHES AND BLANKETS.

...YEAH.
HE'S A NICE PERSON.
HE'S SMELLY, BUT STILL...
THANK YOU, SIR.
WAIT HERE. I'LL GO GET YOU SOME COFFEE.
...NOT REALLY.
WHAT HAPPENED JUST NOW?
DO YOU REMEMBER,
HEY, KEI-KUN.
HUH?
IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THE DRUGS. IT'S CALLED A FLASHBACK.
GUESS I WAS WRONG.
I JUST THOUGHT IT WAS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TAKE DRUGS.

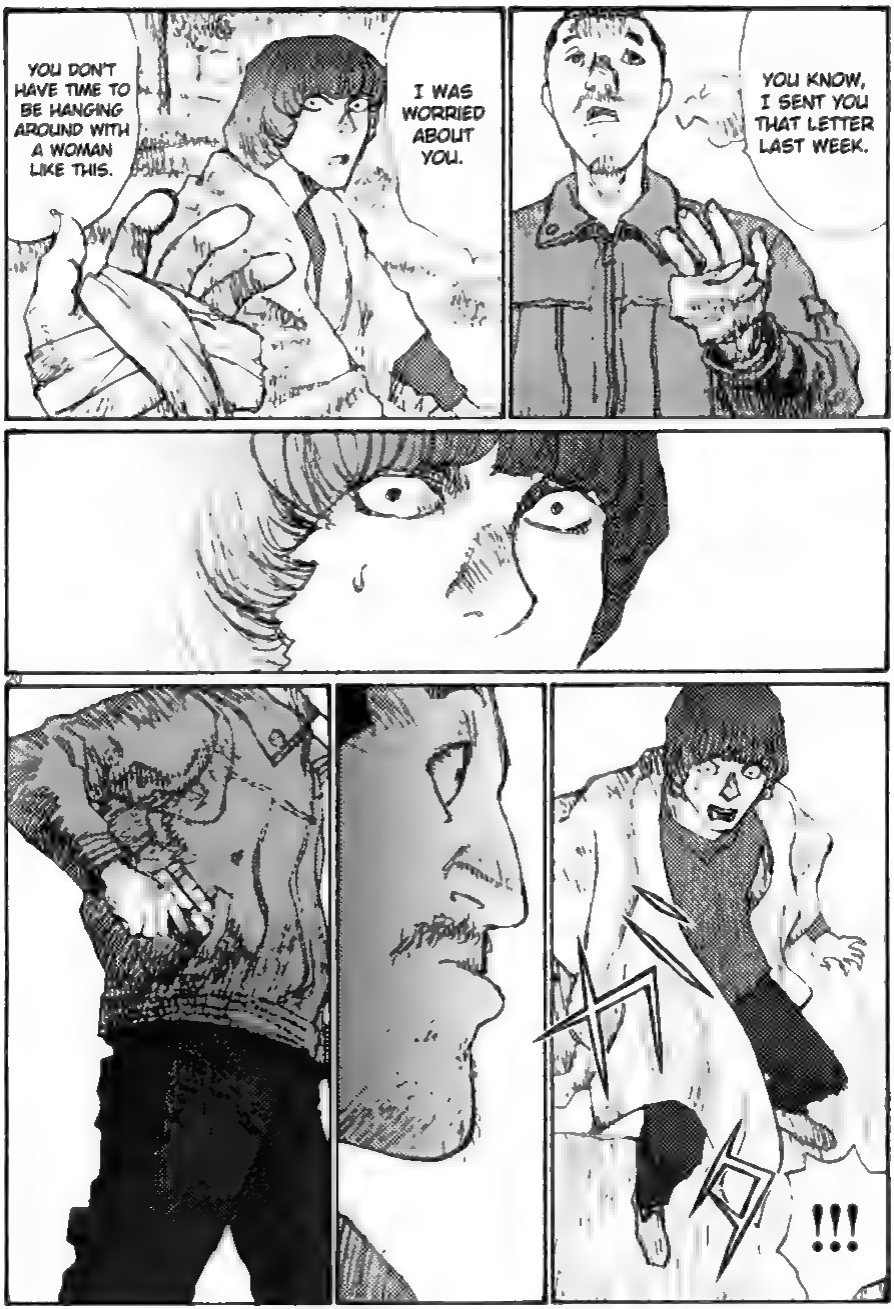
WOW-
I HAVEN'T HAD ONE THAT BAD IN A WHILE...
I GO COMPLETELY OFF MY HEAD.
WHEN SOMETHING TRIGGERS THE TRAUMA FROM MY PAST,
WHAT'S THAT?
I GOTTA HEAD BACK SOON OR ELSE BOBBY'S GONNA GET PISSED.
IT STOPPED SNOWING.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I HAD A NICE, LONG DATE WITH KEI-KUN.
DOESN'T IT FEEL NICE?
WHA-T?
HUP-!

I GOT TO KNOW YOU A LOT BETTER TODAY, KEI-KUN.
BUT STILL, I FEEL LIKE...
AND YOU STILL FEEL GOOD?
WE ALMOST HAD A DOUBLE SUICIDE,
HUH?
I DIDN'T GET FIRED, I QUIT.
YOU GOT FIRED FROM YOUR TALENT AGENCY, RIGHT...?
SO... WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO NOW?
I'M GONNA SING SONGS.
I DECIDED-

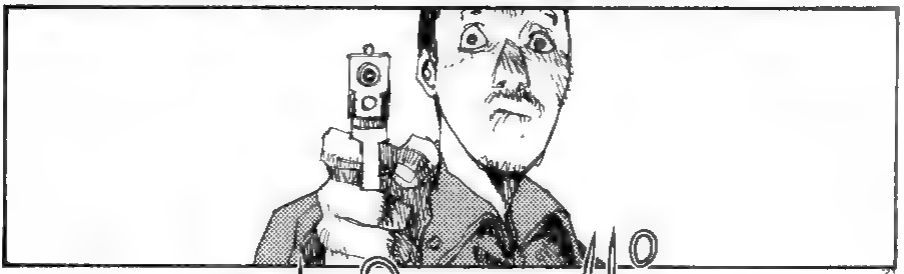
IT'S A SMALL AGENCY, BUT THE PERSON THERE SAID HE'D TAKE ME IN.
I'M GONNA BE A REAL SINGER, NOT A POPSTAR.
SONGS?
BUT I DON'T CARE. I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A REAL SINGER.
I'M ONLY GONNA BE DOING GIGS AT SMALL CLUBS AND BALLROOMS FOR NOW.
I'M GONNA BE WORKING EVEN HARDER THAN YOU, KEI-KUN.
SO I'M TOTALLY PUMPED.
THEY MADE YOU INTO A POPSTAR BECAUSE YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW TO SING...
...WOW-
OH WELL
HAH-HAH...!

I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, TANAKA-KUN?

HUH?


YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE HANGING AROUND WITH A WOMAN LIKE THIS.
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
YOU KNOW, I SENT YOU THAT LETTER LAST WEEK.
!!!

KEI-KUN?



AHH!

KEI-KUN!
EEK....!
DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT HAIRCUT-!
YOU SHOULD

ПО
ГИ

I GOT HIM FROM ALL THE WAY OVER HERE!
THUD
CHECK IT OUT!
H-HE SHOT ME.
ANY INJURIES?
BOBBY-!
B-
ARE YOU OKAY, YO-KO-CHAN?
CALM DOWN! YOU JUST SCRAPED IT WHEN YOU FELL OVER!
CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!
BUT I'M BLEEDING!
THAT'S NOT A BULLET WOUND
MY KNEE!
WHERE?

YO-KO-CHAN!
DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE.
PLEASE, MOM.

Chapter 68

Negotiation Tactics

STAY WITH ME!
YO-KO-CHAN!
DON'T CLOSE YOUR EYES ...!
CAN YOU HEAR ME!?

SHE'S GONNA SUFFOCATE...
TANAKA-KUN!
HURRY UP AND CALL AN AMBULANCE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, TANAKA-KUN!
YO-KO GOT HIT 'CAUSE YOU SHOT THAT GUY AND IT MESSED UP HIS AIM.
I-IT'S YOUR FAULT, BOBBY.

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
WHAT ARE YOU...
UHH.
HUH?
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, ALRIGHT!?
NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF YOU HADN'T DONE ANYTHING STUPID!!
HEY...!
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY OF THIS!
DON'T GET ME INTO TROUBLE LIKE THIS!
UHH...

WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?
TANAKA-KUN!
COME BACK!

TANAKA-KUN!
EEEEK
!
...E-
YOU CAN USE MINE!
I-I DON'T GOT NO CELLPHONE.
HURRY UP AND CALL AN AMBULANCE, MISTER...!

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM!
.....
WHAT WERE YOU DOING, BOBBY!?
.....
AND WHERE'S TANAKA-KUN?
IT'S ALL MY FAULT...
S-SORRY.

I'D BE DEAD IF IT WEREN'T FOR HIM...
DON'T BLAME BOBBY.
TANAKA-KUN.
UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT HER CONDITION IS...
WE CAN'T IMPLEMENT ANY COUNTER-MEASURES,
OPERATING
SOONER OR LATER THE MEDIA WILL CATCH ON.
THIS IS TOO BIG FOR A COVER UP...
THEN IT'S MY FAULT... MY...
IF SHE... IF YO-KO DIES...

BUT SHE'S NOT IN DANGER OF LOSING HER LIFE
SHE NEEDS TO STAY RESTED FOR NOW
WHY WOULD I BE KIDDING?
YOU'RE KIDDING!
HUH?
GOOD FOR YOU, TANAKA-KUN!

BUT SHE CAN'T TALK ANYMORE 'CAUSE HER VOCAL CORDS ARE DAMAGED
THANKS DOCTOR! YOU'RE INCREDIBLE!
WHY WOULD I BE KIDDING?
YOU'RE KIDDING.
... GOING TO BE A SINGER.
I'M, ...

I'M REALLY EXCITED!
OUR STATIONS ARE DIFFERENT SO I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO MEET YOU, AND...
THIS IS REALLY A DREAM COME TRUE! I'M SO HONORED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH YOU, MS. HIGUCHI!
I COULDN'T SLEEP AT ALL LAST NIGHT!
I GOT SO WORKED UP,

HUH!?
WHO IS THIS MIDGET...? ARE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLERS ALLOWED TO DRIVE?
I'M NOT AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLER, MA'AM!
I MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M 26 YEARS OLD—!
YOUR NAME...?
IT'S KANA IIBOSHI.
AND THAT'S THE 3RD TIME YOU'VE ASKED ME THAT TODAY...

I TEND TO FILTER OUT USELESS INFORMATION WHEN I'M CONCENTRATING ON MY WORK.
OH REALLY.
I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN ACTION.
I ADMIRE YOU, MS. HIGUCHI.
CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO ME WHY MY HAIR IS BURNING?
WHAT?
IT'S OKAY!
SHOULDN'T YOU BE HOLDING THE STEERING WHEEL?
TICK

SO IT'S ALREADY BEEN 8 YEARS, HASN'T IT...
YES... BUT, I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

MS. CHIEKO WAS ABDUCTED AND CRUELLY BEATEN TO DEATH BY A GANG OF THUGS LED BY KEITA TANAKA. IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
I UNDERSTAND YOUR PAIN.
IT FEELS LIKE CHIEKO WAS ALIVE AND WELL JUST A FEW DAYS AGO.
I'VE TAKEN A QUICK LOOK THROUGH THE COURT AND INVESTIGATIVE RECORDS OF MS. CHIEKO'S MURDER, AND...
YES, I'M AWARE OF THAT.
KEITA TANAKA WAS NEVER INDICTED, SO A VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT MUST BE OUT OF THE QUESTION.
BUT WHY HAS AN ENFORCEMENT AGENCY SHOWED UP NOW?
IT APPEARS AS THOUGH THEY PURPOSELY CHOSE EVIDENCE AND TESTIMONY THAT WOULD BENEFIT KEITA TANAKA.
IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO ME.

SO TANAKA HAS INFLUENCE OVER ALL OF THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING THE POLICE.
KEITA TANAKA IS THE SON OF A POWERFUL POLITICIAN FROM THESE PARTS...
BUT THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH AN INDIVIDUAL CAN DO...
WE DID THE BEST WE COULD!
WHY DIDN'T YOU PRESS THE ISSUE?
THAT SORT OF INJUSTICE SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED.
THAT'S NOT NECESSARY!
THEN PLEASE ALLOW US TO COOPERATE!

I WON'T BE ABLE TO RUN MY BUSINESS WITHOUT PATRONS AND BUSINESS PARTNERS...
THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE CITIZENS OF THIS TOWN ARE FANATICAL SUPPORTERS OF THE TANAKA FACTION.
WOULD MEAN?
WHICH,
THAT'S THE REALITY OF OUR SITUATION...
DEAR...
YOU CAN'T MAKE A LIVING IN THIS TOWN,
IF YOU REBEL AGAINST THE TANAKAS.
!
AHH...

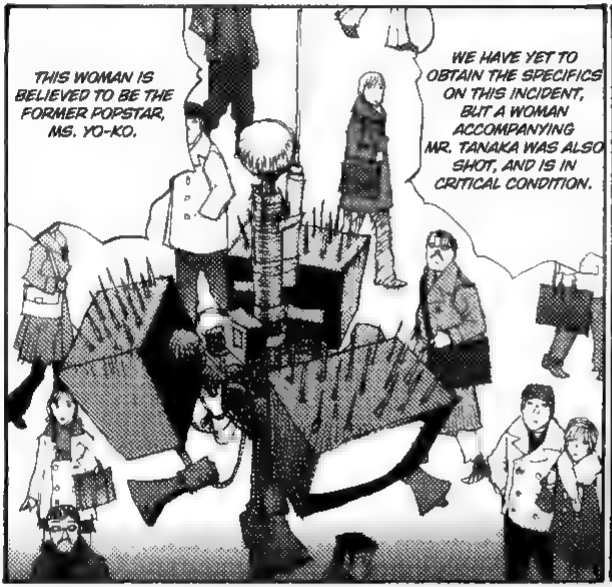
プル プル プル
"REFERENCE": THE FINAL SCENE OF THE 19TH ANIME, "THE DOG OF FLANDERS"
THAT'S SO HORRIBLE—! HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT—!?
うわあああ
OH!
I FEEL SORRY FOR MS. CHIEKO—!
I WON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER!
MS. CHIEKO WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO REST IN PEACE LIKE THIS!

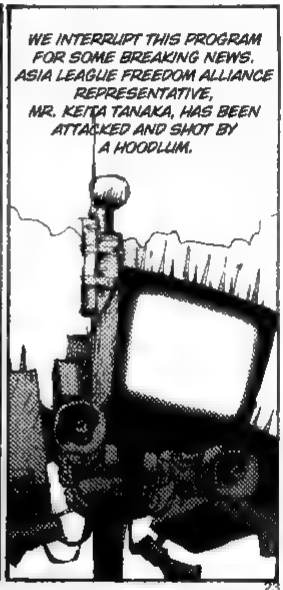
BE MORE SELF-CONSCIOUS OF YOUR ACTIONS.
AN ENFORCEMENT SECRETARY MUST NOT EXHIBIT SUCH EMOTION.
WHAP
SILENCE.
BUT THIS IS ALL PART OF THE RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION WE FEEL AS CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS.
I APOLOGIZE FOR THAT OUTBURST, MR. AND MRS. KATAGIRI.
IT IS A MERE TRIFLE COMPARED TO THE PRICE THAT MAN MUST PAY FOR TAKING MS. CHIEKO'S LIFE!
BUT WHY SHOULD THAT STAND IN THE WAY!?
TRUE, THIS WILL NOT BE AN EASY ENFORCEMENT.
AND THEY DO IT BECAUSE THEY KNOW THEIR JOB IS WELL WORTH THE RISK.
ENFORCEMENT PROXIES PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE.

SO PLEASE! FOR MS. CHIEKO! FOR THE INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO LEAD RIGHTEOUS DAILY LIVES! YOU MUST FIGHT WITH US!
WE MUST NOT ALLOW THAT VILLAIN TO CONTINUE LIVING AS A CELEBRITY, WITHOUT ATONING FOR THE SINS HE HAS COMMITTED!
BY PUTTING YOUR LIVES ON THE LINE!

MAIL ORDER SALESPERSON. . NEWSPAPER SOLICITOR, MOVING SERVICES, TELEPHONE APPOINTER, AND SECURITY GUARD
TILE CRAFTSMAN, RESTAURANT FLOOR STAFF, ...
LONG-DISTANCE TRUCK DRIVER,
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO CHOOSE A SHALLOW, WORTHLESS JOB LIKE THE ENFORCEMENT PROXY
WHY... THERE'S PLENTY OF JOBS OUT THERE.

FUCKING ASSHOLES—!
WHY WON'T THEY HIRE A 50-YEAR OLD!
DAMN IT!
I WON'T BE QUITTING THE AGENCY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
WELL, THERE'S NO NEED TO GET HASTY.
I'LL COPY IT FOR NOW, AND TAKE A BETTER LOOK AT HOME.
CLICK


THIS WOMAN IS BELIEVED TO BE THE FORMER POPSTAR, MS. YO-KO.
WE HAVE YET TO OBTAIN THE SPECIFICS ON THIS INCIDENT, BUT A WOMAN ACCOMPANYING MR. TANAKA WAS ALSO SHOT, AND IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION.

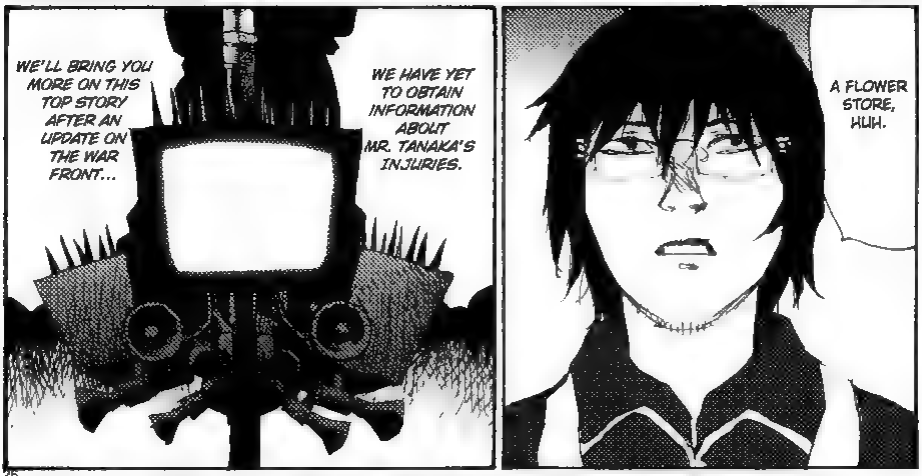

WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM FOR SOME BREAKING NEWS. ASIA LEAGUE FREEDOM ALLIANCE REPRESENTATIVE, MR. KEITA TANAKA, HAS BEEN ATTACKED AND SHOT BY A HOODLUM.

WE'VE BEEN TOLD THAT AN EMERGENCY PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BEGIN MOMENTARILY, BUT...
WHAT? KEITA'S NOT DEAD?
HIM AGAIN...
FOR REAL!?
AWESOME!
WE'VE GOT A LIVE FEED FROM OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL WHERE THE WOMAN WAS HOSPITALIZED.

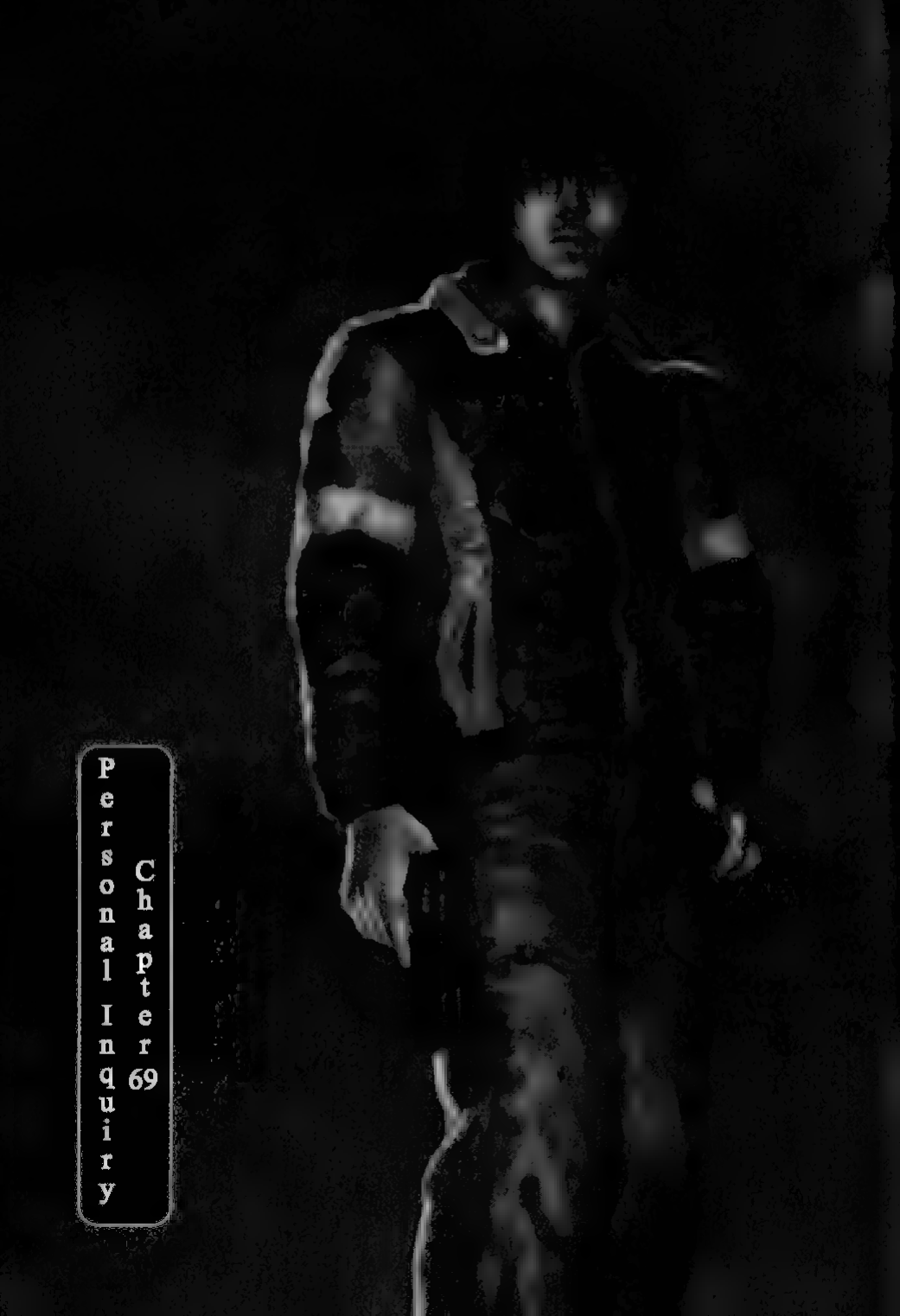
CARE TO BUY A FLOWER?
EXCUSE ME—
HOO-HOO, YOU DON'T NEED A REASON.
AND WHAT'S A GIFT?
WHAT'S A FLOWER?
FLOWER?
HUFF HUFF
FOR YOUR MOTHER... A GIFT FOR YOUR LOVED ONE.
MIHO!
IT'S THE FEELING OF GIVING THAT COUNTS.
FLOWER 花
Macho

GET OVER HERE, DAMMIT!
FLOWER
YOU CAN HAVE IT.
IF YOU WON'T BUY IT...
25
YOU DON'T NEED A REASON.
I-I-I TOLD YOU.
WHY.
.....?
IT'S THE FEELING THAT COUNTS.

FLOWER
FLOW
E


WE'LL BRING YOU MORE ON THIS TOP STORY AFTER AN UPDATE ON THE WAR FRONT...
WE HAVE YET TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT MR. TANAKA'S INJURIES.
A FLOWER STORE, HUH.

NO WAY!
THAT WOULDN'T BE BAD EITHER...
DID YOU HEAR THAT!? K-TA'S DEAD!


Personal Inquiry
Chapter 69

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
HEY!
DJ UM-KO
STOP IT!
LOOK, I TOLD YOU WE'RE PLAYING THE MONARCH GAME!
NO RAPING OR ANYTHING, ALRIGHT...
HEY, DON'T GO TOO FAR, TOMITA-KUN.
JUST TITS, OKAY? JUST TITS...
S- SOMEONE...!

HEY SHUNPEI, YOU COME OVER AND HELP OUT!
HUH?
...WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT.
DON'T WORRY, TANAKA-KUN! SHE'S NOT RESISTING THAT MUCH!
WH-WHAT'S UP!? STOP BOTHERING US, TANAKA-KUN!
LOOK, JUST LET HER GO ALREADY!
TOMITA, KITAGUCHI!
HEY, JUST CUT IT OUT!
THE POLICE ARE GONNA COME FOR US!
I'M SAYING,

OH.

WHA, WAIT A SEC!
GAAA—ME SET!
NO WAITING, FOOL.
STEEERIKE YEEER OUT!
WE'RE GONNA FUCKING KILL YOU!
WHAT THE HELL YOU DOING, SHUNPEI —YOU SUCKER—!
I'M IN CHARGE OF THE PARTY, SO I GOTTA HEAD OFF—
SHUNPEI, YOU STAY BEHIND AND CLEAN UP FOR EVERYONE AS A PENALTY.
YO, LET'S HIT THE BAR.
SHUT UP—!
THAT WAS OUR BIG CHANCE FOR A COMEBACK
YOU WON'T BEAT US IN A DRINKING GAME, HEH-HEH-HEH.
LOOKS LIKE YOUR TEAM'S GONNA END UP IN THE GUTTER AGAIN.
S-SORRY BRO.

I'M JUST GONNA HEAD ON HO—ME.
I'M TOO TIRED ANYWAYS.
YEAH, ALRIGHT.
BASEBALL... LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING FUN OUT THERE— MR. SHUPEI OKADA.
WE'RE FROM THE KATSUMI AGENCY. THE ONES WHO CALLED YESTERDAY.
WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?

I'M NOT GONNA TESTIFY.
I TOLD YOU YESTERDAY.
BATTLES
UNTIL YOU PROMISE TO PROVIDE US WITH TESTIMONY ON KEITA TANAKA'S EVIL DOINGS.
YOU CAN'T HEAD ON HO—ME.
BUT I WORK AT A LIQUOR STORE. I CAN'T MAKE A LIVING UNLESS I MAKE DELIVERIES AND STOCK RICE.
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY. YOU GUYS MAKE A LIVING OFF YOUR MORAL CAUSE...
BUT WHY, SIR? WHY? WHY DO YOU HIDE THE TRUTH? YOU'RE ABANDONING YOUR MORAL OBLIGATIONS.
06
!
TOSHI-CHA—N!

WHY ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE LEFT?
HUH—? WHERE'S EVERYONE ELSE?
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO IF YOU HAVE A MISCARRIAGE!?
LOOK, YOU'RE ABOUT TO HAVE YOUR BABY, MICHIKO. YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
YOU NEVER LEARN, DO YOU—
IS THIS ANOTHER PENALTY 'CAUSE YOU SCREWED UP AGAIN?
CAME CLOSE SO I THOUGHT I'D STOP BY.
ACTUALLY I WAS MAKING DELIVERIES WHILE YOU GUYS WERE OFF PLAYING BASEBALL.

SMILE
STARE—
OH... THEY'RE, UHH INSURANCE PEOPLE.
BY THE WAY, WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? HAVEN'T SEEN THEM AROUND.
WE HAVEN'T EATEN TOGETHER IN A PRETTY LONG TIME—
REALLY? NIII—CE
GRIN
BRO'S IN CHARGE, SO HE'S GONNA BE LATE... I'LL HEAD HOME AS SOON AS I FINISH CLEANING UP.
OH WELL. WHERE'S TAKA-KUN? DID HE GO DRINKING?
THEY WORK SUNDAYS TOO, HUH—
OHH—
RIGHT.
I'M GONNA FUCKING KILL YOU UNLESS YOU COME STRAIGHT HOME! FOR REAL!
ALRIGHT, I'LL GO HOME AND MAKE YOU SOMETHING—!

TALK ABOUT PEARLS BEFORE SWINE—
ABSOLUTELY— AND SHE SEEMS LIKE A NICE PERSON, TOO.
WOW WHAT A LOVELY LADY—
HOW...?
.....
HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU FIND SOMEONE LIKE THAT?
I THINK I UNDER-ESTIMATED YOU—
HUH?
WHAT'RE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT?
AND GET YOUR HANDS OFF THE EQUIP-MENT.
SHE'S BEEN HANGING AROUND WITH ME AND MY BROTHER EVER SINCE WHEN WE WERE LITTLE.
MICHIKO IS... A CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF MINE.

FOR MR. OKADA TO FALL IN LOVE WITH MS. MICHIKO AND MARRY HER. THAT'S SO ROMANTIC.
SO IT WAS ONLY NATURAL,
I GREW UP WITH ALL THE GUYS ON THE BASEBALL TEAM.
I'VE KNOWN THEIR WIVES SINCE THEY WERE LITTLE, TOO.
OUT HERE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, THE KIDS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD STICK TOGETHER.
THEN SHRIVEL UP AND DIE HERE.
GET MARRIED, HAVE KIDS,
RAISE THEM,
THAT'S ABOUT IT...
WELL...
...SO?
THAT'S LIFE... AND EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT US.
THAT'S HOW IT'S GONNA GO ON FOREVER UNLESS THIS PLACE BURNS UP INTO ASH.

LOOK... YOU CAN'T LIVE IN THESE PARTS IF YOU CROSS THE TANAKA FAMILY.
IT'S THE EQUIVALENT TO DESTROYING YOUR OWN IDENTITY.
SO I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE TRUTH.
AND I DON'T WANT MORAL OBLIGATIONS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
I JUST WANT MY LIFE TO GO ON LIKE THIS FOREVER.
TAP
YOU GOT THAT?
THAT'S ALL IT IS.

AH?
IS THAT WHAT YOU REALLY BELIEVE?
REALLY?
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT.
WHAT.
HEY, WHERE YOU GUYS GOING?
OH WE LL.
YOU DON'T WANNA MESS WITH THOSE GUYS...!
AND GIMME BACK THE HELMET AND THE BAT, DAMMIT!
HEY, WAIT!
WE'LL ASK THEM TO TESTIFY.
WHA...
TOMITA, AND... KITAGUCHI, WAS IT?
TO SEE THE OTHER POTENTIAL WITNESSES.

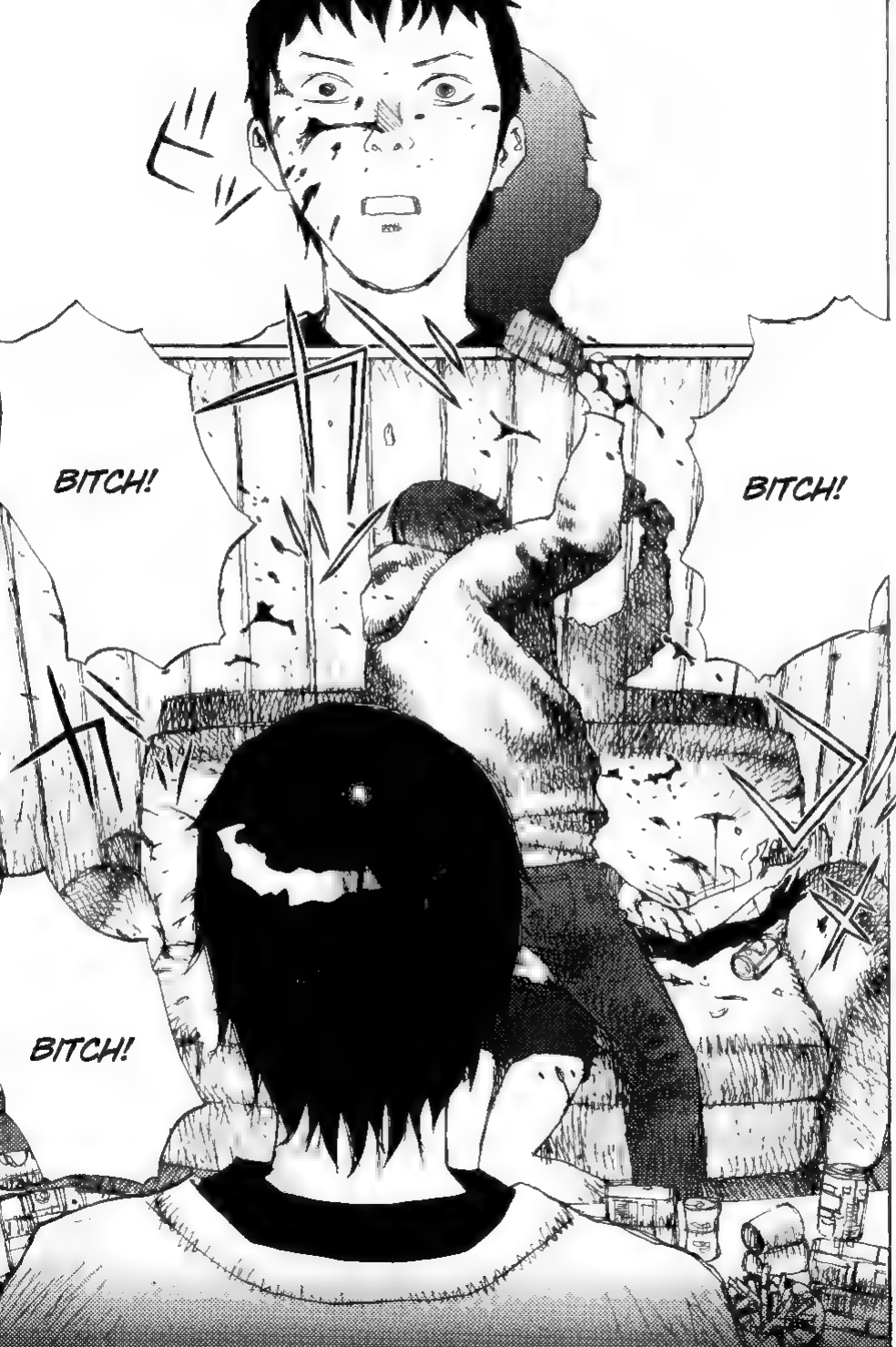
OH... THAT'S...
HUH...!?
OH, SO YOU ARE GOING TO TESTIFY FOR US?
CAN'T.
BATTLES
WORD IS, THEY GOT ALL KINDS OF STUFF FROM THE TANAKA'S AFTERWARDS. WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'LL DO TO YOU TWO.
THOSE GUYS ARE CROOKS... I'VE CUT TIES WITH THEM, TOO.
BATTLES
AND WHY SHOULDN'T WE?
OH?
IT'S GONNA BE DANGEROUS WITH JUST GIRLS...
AND GIMME BACK THE HELMET AND THE BAT ...
ONE!
TWO!
TWO!
ONE!
H-HEY...
06
THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST SIT BACK AND WATCH, OKAY—?
I'M NOT TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS...

A NORTHEAST- SOLO- VOYAGE-

WE NEED YOUR TESTIMONY IN ORDER TO INVOKE THE PROXY ACT ON KEITA TANAKA.
PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT.
GLUP
I ALREADY TOLD YOU I'M NOT GONNA TESTIFY.
YOU DON'T LET UP, DO YOU...
IT WENT DOWN JUST LIKE I SAID IN THE TRIAL—
LOOK, I DON'T REMEMBER TOO MUCH ABOUT THAT NIGHT, ALRIGHT MISSY?
I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING.
I WAS ASLEEP DURING THAT WHOLE THING, SO...
RIGHT, KITAGUCHI?

SORRY FOR BOTHERING YOU.
I SUPPOSE WE'LL BE RELYING ON SHUNPEI OKADA AFTER ALL
...VERY WELL THEN.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST GIVE UP AND GO HOME.
THERE YOU GO.
YOU WENT AND TALKED TO THE YOUNGER BROTHER FROM THE LIQUOR STORE?
DID YOU SAY SHUNPEI?
WE MET HE TOLD US HE WOULD CONSIDER IT IN A POSITIVE LIGHT.
THIS MORNING.
THAT'S RIGHT.

HE WOULD GIVE US HIS FULL COOPERATION. EVEN IF IT MEANT SACRIFICING EVERYTHING IN HIS DAILY LIFE.
HE SAID, IN ORDER TO UNCOVER THE TRUTH AND PURSUE HIS MORAL OBLIGATION,
LITTLE ...!?
LET'S GO, LITTLE ELF.
WHAT DID YOU SAY...!?
WH-
FUCKING BASTARD ...
HEY, WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO, TOMITA-KUN.


BITCH!
BITCH!
BITCH!

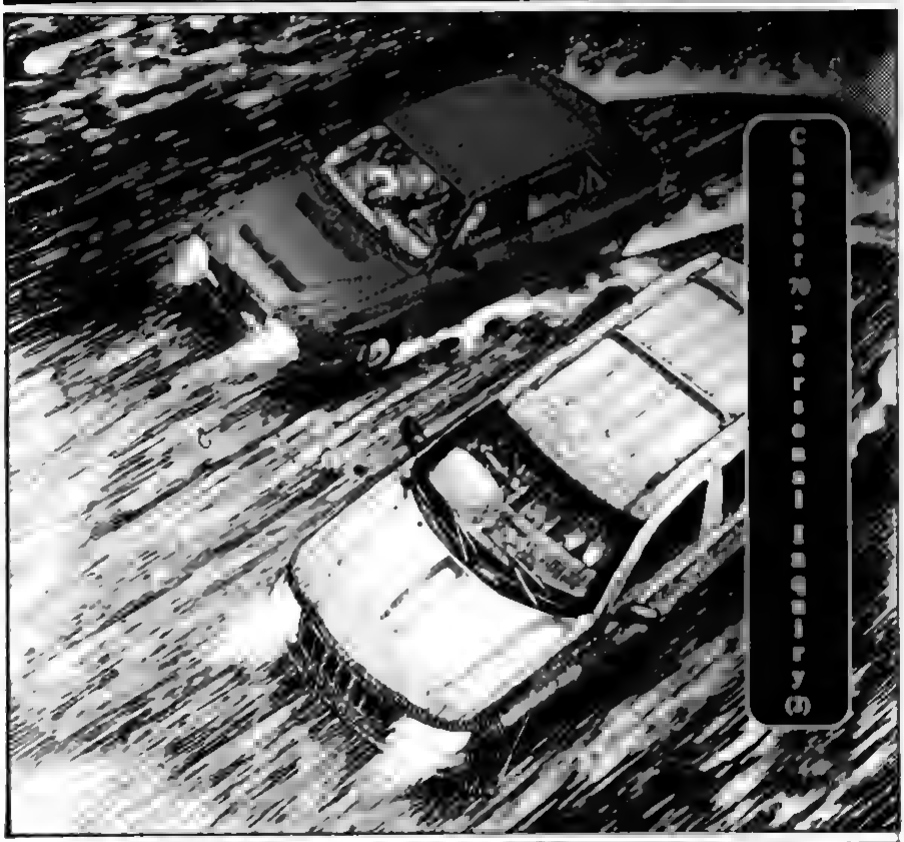
BITCH!
BITCH!
BITCH!
WHAT THE HECK IS WRONG WITH YOU...!?
HEY, CUT IT OUT, TANAKA-KUN!
BITCH!
BITCH!
R-RIGHT.
GET HER OUTTA HERE, SHUNPEI!
BITCH!
BITCH!

ARE YOU HURT...?
H-HEY, ARE YOU OKAY?

THAT WOMAN MADE ME HAVE A BAD DREAM.
SHIT. .
HOPE THEY AREN'T GETTING HARASSED OR ANYTHING.
WONDER IF THEY REALLY WENT OVER TO SEE TOMITA...

6
SS—T
MICHIKO...
.....
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE NARROW OUR SEARCH DOWN TO TOMITA AND KITAGUCHI?
I THINK WE SHOULD KEEP PRESSING TOMITA.

I'M SURE HE DOESN'T WANT ANY TROUBLE...
OKADA JUST GOT MARRIED, AND HE'S ABOUT TO HAVE A CHILD.
AND IF WE EXTORT THEM WITH THAT, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET A TESTIMONY.
ALL SORTS OF THINGS SHOULD POP UP IF WE PRESSURE THOSE TWO,
!
ARE YOU LISTENING, MS. HIGUCHI?
DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE WE SHOULD JUST LEAVE THOSE TWO ALONE?


Chapter 8: Personal Inquiry (3)

AH!

AHHH!
SPIN...
THAT WAS DEFINITELY ON PURPOSE, WASN'T IT?
ARE YOU ALRIGHT? MS. HIGUCHI...

GACHUK
SHUK
WE'RE GONNA BE OKAY? RIGHT, MS. HIGUCHI...? ARE YOU LISTENING??
I-I-I MIGHT NOT LOOK IT, BUT I HAVE A THIRD-DEGREE BLACK BELT IN KARATE!

STOP RIGHT THERE.
YOU GUYS...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE.
SEE? I TOLD YOU.
HEY... IT'S MR. OKADA.
SHUNPEI...

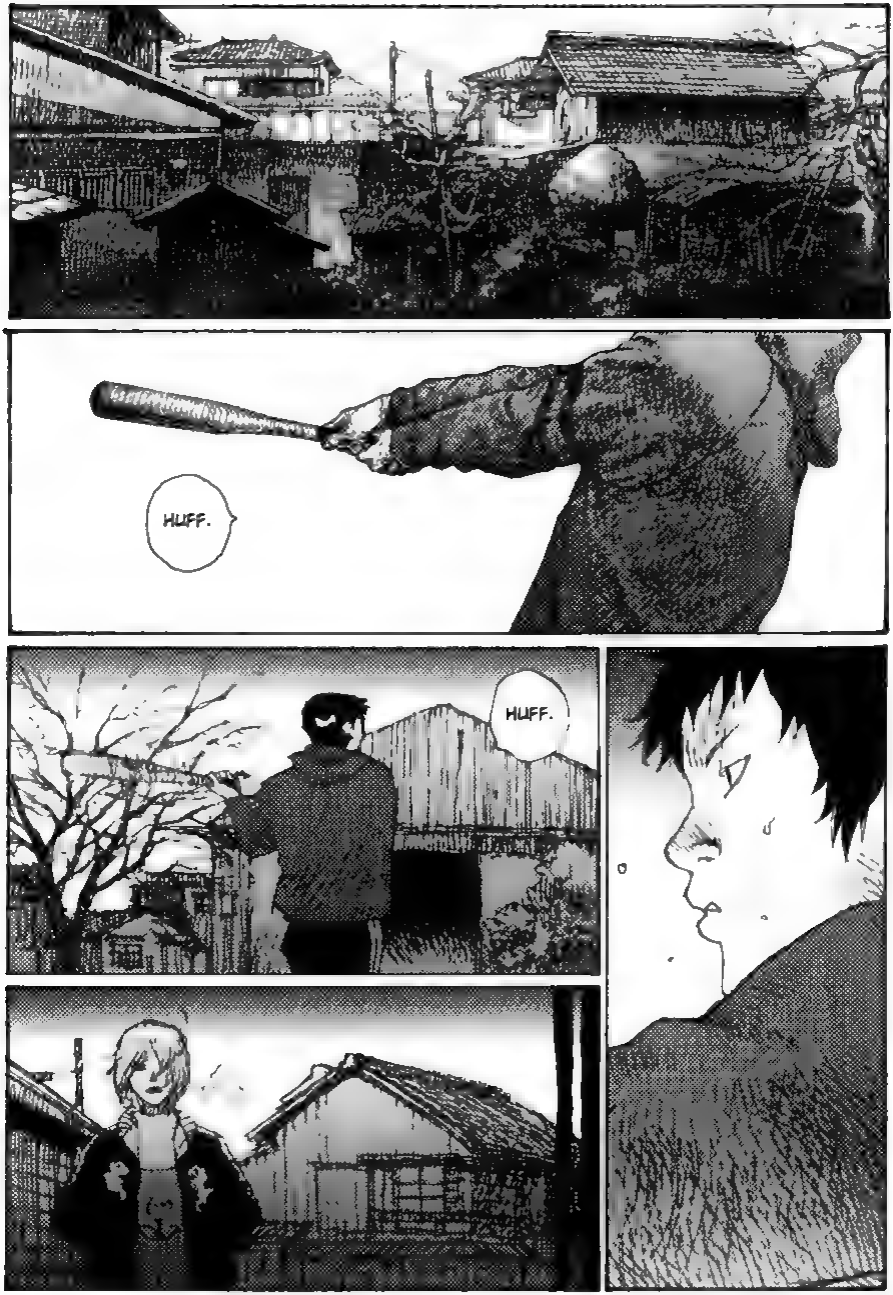
SO I CAME TO CHECK ON THEM.
I WAS WORRIED THOSE TWO WERE HEADING FOR YOUR HANGOUT.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I CAN TOTALLY RECOGNIZE YOU THROUGH THE MASKS.
TOMITA AND KITAGUCHI, RIGHT?
WE DON'T TAKE SHIT FROM TRAITORS!
DON'T PLAY DUMB.
WHAT ARE YOU...
HUH?
SO YOU REALLY ARE GONNA TESTIFY.
AH-HAH!
SHUT UP! ACTING ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY AND SHIT...
W-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT. I'M NOT GONNA TESTIFY.

YOU'LL REGRET CROSSING THE TANAKA FAMILY...
WE'LL FUCK YOUR CHIN UP SO BAD, YOU'RE NEVER GONNA EAT AGAIN!
BATTLES
COULDN'T MUSTER THE COURAGE TO COME ALONE.
SORRY.

RUN!
LET'S JUST BURY THESE BASTARDS AND HIT IT BACK TO THE BAR.
UH...
WHAT THE HELL, GOT US ALL PUMPED UP FOR A RUMBLE BUT THERE'S ONLY TWO OF 'EM.
WE'RE GONNA BUST YOUR ASS!
W-WE'RE SAVED.
WAIT UP, FUCKERS!
YOU BETTER WATCH YOUR ASS BACK IN TOWN, SHUNPEI!
MOTHERFUCKER!

YOU ALRIGHT?
DON'T CHASE 'EM ANY FURTHER.
ALRIGHT, LET 'EM GO.
AND WHAT WAS THAT BULLSHIT TOMITA SAID ABOUT ME TESTIFYING?
SOUNDS LIKE YOU KNEW I WAS GONNA COME.
YOU'D COME AND RESCUE US-
WOW- I NEVER THOUGHT
I'M JUST DOING MY JOB.
FINE BY ME-
ONE HELL OF A SAMARITAN YOU ARE.
SO YOU'LL DO ANYTHING TO GET ME TO TESTIFY, HUH?

I'M JUST YANKING YOUR CHAIN.
BUT I DON'T INTEND TO FORCEFULLY OBTAIN A TESTIMONY.
FAREWELL.
I SHALL RETURN TOMORROW.
LET'S MOVE, SHUNPEI-
WHAT...?
WE'RE STILL 15KM AWAY FROM THE HOTEL...
WE'RE WALKING.
WE'RE WALKING BACK.
HUH?!
M-MS. HIGUCHI, THE RADIATOR'S ALL SCREWED UP.

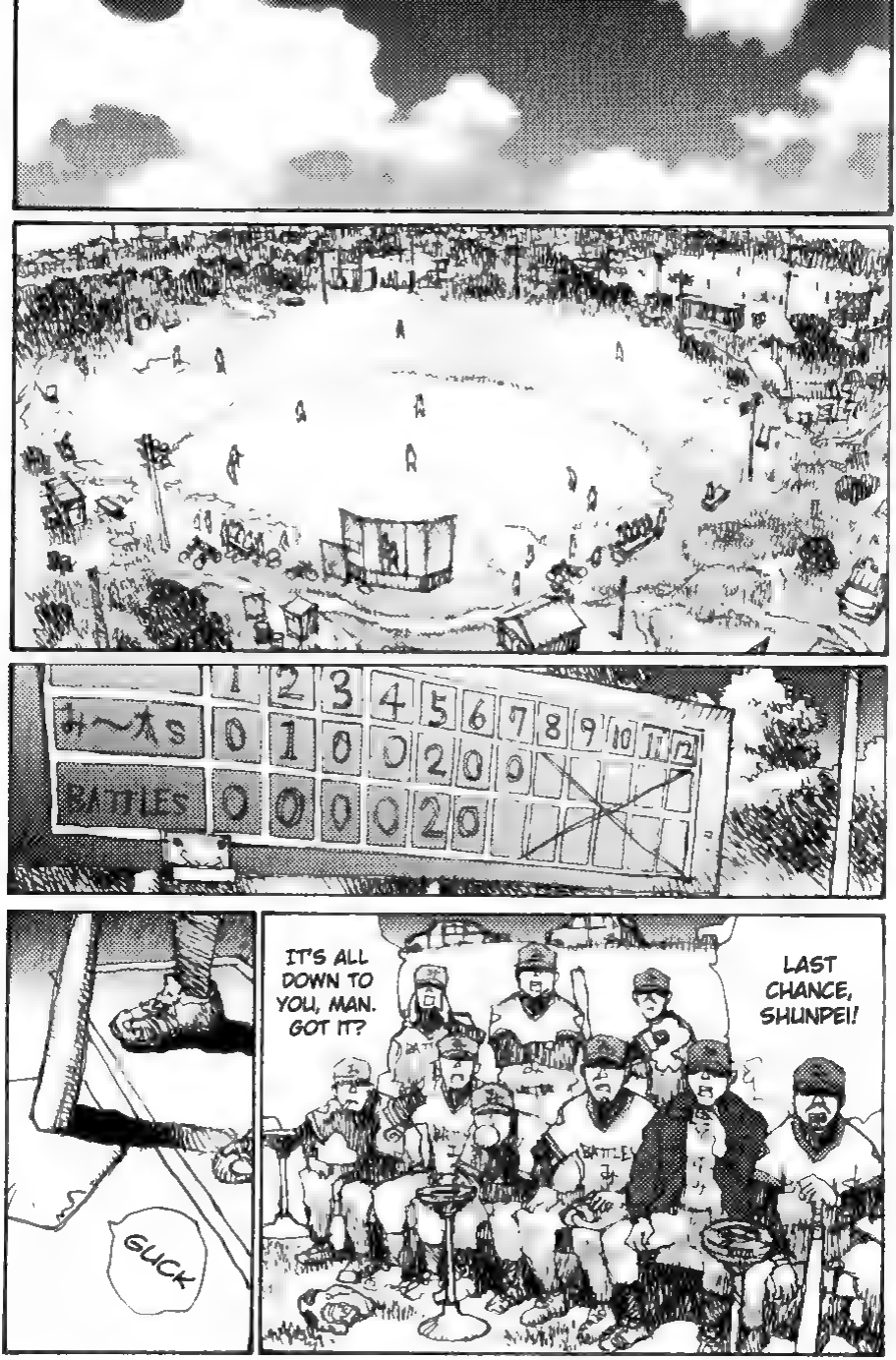

HUFF.
HUFF.

CAN'T SCREW UP TODAY'S GAME.
MY WORKOUT.
IT'S STILL BEFORE DAWN
EARLY BIRD.
THEY'RE FROM A VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, RIGHT?
THOSE TWO AREN'T INSURANCE PEOPLE.
I HEARD FROM TAKA-KUN.
HEY-
WHAT ELSE WE GOT TO DO IN THESE PARTS?
DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO BESIDES BASEBALL?
CAN'T COVER IT UP ANY LONGER...
I DRAGGED 'EM ALL INTO THIS MESS...
YEAH... I TOLD ALL THE GUYS ON THE TEAM YESTERDAY.

TOMITA'S GOT THE MAFIA BACKING HIM, SO THEY'RE NOT GONNA GO OUT EASY... WE GOTTA CRUNK IT ONCE OR TWICE NO MATTER WHAT.
BRO SAID TO DO WHATEVER.
THEY TELL YOU TO TESTIFY?
AND? TAKA-KUN AND THE GUYS.
THEY GOT THE CRAZIES FROM PLAYING BASEBALL ALL THIS TIME...
THING IS, THEY WERE ALL DOWN WITH IT... STARTED CLEANING OUT THEIR SHOTGUNS...
I JUST GOTTA LEAVE THIS PLACE.
EASY.
I'M SCARED.
ISN'T THERE ANY OTHER WAY...?

HUH?
YOU NEED TO STAY, TOSHI-CHAN!
NO!
I JUST GOTTA GET OUT OF TOWN.
I'M THE ONLY ONE THEY'RE AFTER...
EVERYONE'S GONNA PROTECT YOU, TOSHI-CHAN!
SO WE'RE GONNA BE OKAY!
NOBODY WANTS YOU TO LEAVE...
WE'VE ALWAYS SORTED OUT OUR PROBLEMS TOGETHER.

YOU HAVE TO HELP RAISE THE BABY WITH EVERYONE ELSE.
AND THE BABY'S GONNA BE BORN SOON.
GUESS SO.
YEAH...
KNEW IT ALL ALONG.
KNEW THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN.


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
みーんs 0 1 0 0 2 0 0
BATTLEs 0 0 0 0 2 0
GUCK
IT'S ALL DOWN TO YOU, MAN. GOT IT?
LAST CHANCE, SHUNPEI!

HM?
I GOT THIS.
RIGHT.
THOSE TWO...
HUH.

16
MICHIKO'S A CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF MINE.
SHE'S BEEN HANGING AROUND WITH ME AND MY BROTHER EVER SINCE WHEN WE WERE LITTLE.

FOR MR. OKADA TO FALL IN LOVE WITH MS. MICHIKO AND MARRY HER.
SO IT WAS ONLY NATURAL,
THEN SHRIVEL UP AND DIE HERE.
GET MARRIED, HAVE KIDS, RAISE THEM,
SHE'S GONNA DIE.
GOTTA TAKE HER TO THE HOSPITAL...
IT'S THE EQUIVALENT TO DESTROYING YOUR OWN IDENTITY.

06
I'M JUST YANKING YOUR CHAIN...

BAP
GAAA-ME SET!
WHA... WAIT A SEC...
STEEERIKE YER OUT!
NO WAITING, FOOL.
CRAP.
OH.
RIGHT-OFF WE GO-
DIE!
WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOING!?
THAT PITCH WAS OUTTA THE STRIKE-ZONE.
YOU IDIOT.

FORGET ABOUT BASEBALL!
WHY DIDN'T YOU ANSWER THE PHONE!?
OKADA-!
THEY GOT IT, THE BABY...
MS. MICHIKO'S WATER JUST BROKE... SHE'S AT THE HOSPITAL!
WHA...
IT'S A BOY-
RIGHT ON, NOW YOU GOT A KID TO KEEP UP THAT LIQUOR STORE
WOW DUDE-

CONGRATS, TAKA!
EVERYONE SKIP WORK TODAY, WE GOTTA CELEBRATE-
HURRY UP, GO SEE WHAT YOUR KID LOOKS LIKE.
YOU KNEW I WAS LYING ALL ALONG.
CUT THE CRAP.
SHE WASN'T YOUR WIFE AFTER ALL.
OH? SO MS. MICHIKO,

THIS LITTLE ELF TOTALLY FELL FOR IT THOUGH.
SIGH
RIGHT-?
WE DID RUN A BACKGROUND CHECK ON YOU BEFOREHAND...
THANKS.
SURE...
CONGRATS, BRO.
YOU HEAD ON OVER AFTER YOU FINISH CLEANING UP, OKAY?
WE'RE OFF TO THE HOSPITAL, SHUNPEI...

SO LISTEN UP.
I'M STATING MY CONDITIONS,
AND LIVING EXPENSES... PROTECTION OF PRIVACY.
ENSURED WORK AND RESIDENCE IN MY NEW ENVIRONMENT. IMPROVING ON MY CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, OF COURSE.
06
DON'T GET ME WRONG.
CERTAINLY.
WE'LL DO OUR ABSOLUTE BEST.
AND I DON'T WANT MORAL OBLIGATIONS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE TRUTH,

BASICALLY, I'M A SHIT-HEADED SAMARITAN.
SAME AS YOU.
IF THIS PLACE ISN'T GONNA BURN UP INTO ASH, THEN I'M THE ONE THAT'S GOTTA GO.
I JUST CAN'T STAND HAVING MY LIFE GO ON LIKE THIS FOREVER.
ME?
NEVER.
06

YOU MAKE ME WANNA PUKE.
I DON'T EVER WANNA SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN.
06
MR. OKADA.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Chapter 71
Personal Information

ANY SQUADS THAT DON'T MAKE THE TIME RUN AN EXTRA LAP!
PICK IT UP SQUAD D, YOUR LINES ARE SLACKING!
B
REMEMBER, A SQUAD IS ALWAYS UNITED IN BODY AND SPIRIT!
DON'T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND!

HE'S PRETTY MUCH DYING
HOW'S HE DOING?
HOW'S TANAKA-KUN DOING?
RUN LIKE YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!
アジア連合自由同盟主催
合同軍事教練会
HE SHOWS UP AT THE DRILLS EVERY SINGLE WEEKEND...
WANNA QUIT?
BUT HE REALLY TRIES, DOESN'T HE...?
LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN FORCING HIMSELF TO KEEP GOING...
EVER SINCE THAT SHOOTING...

DELIBERATION ON THE VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT OF MR. KEITA TANAKA WILL BEGIN NEXT WEEK.
BEING AN UNUSUAL INQUIRY INTO A CASE WHERE ALL ORIGINAL CHARGES HAVE BEEN DROPPED, THE ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED A PLETHORA OF PUBLIC ATTENTION.
THE OMARU AGENCY, THE HANDLERS FOR THIS CASE, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE EARLIER,
Topics
NEW
Mr. Keita Tanaka, possible vengeance enforcement code target?
STATING THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY SECURED A WITNESS, AND ARE CONFIDENT IN THE EVENT OF A SHOWDOWN IN THE COURTROOM.
I HEARD THE OMARU AGENCY'S JUST A COVER.
IT'S THAT KATSUMI AGENCY THAT'S ACTUALLY HANDLING EVERYTHING.
WELL, THAT AGENCY IS UNDER A RESTRAINING ORDER...
BUT THEY'VE GOT SERIOUS BACKING FROM ONE OF THE PRO-ENFORCEMENT POLITICIANS.
死
国民

SEEMS LIKE THEY JUST WANNA GET THIS ENFORCEMENT ON NO MATTER WHAT, BUT TRADITION-WISE IT'S TOTALLY UNHEARD OF.
AND THE PUBLIC WON'T ALLOW IT.
PEOPLE'VE STARTED TO SYMPATHIZE AFTER THE YO-KO-CHAN SHOOTING INCIDENT.
BUT YA KNOW- THEY GOT PEOPLE IN THE JUSTICE BUREAU TOO. AREN'T THEY GONNA TRY AND PUSH IT THROUGH!?
WE'LL JUST IGNORE WHATEVER THE HELL THEY TRY AND TELL US.
WE GOT OUR GUYS ON IT ALREADY.
GOT THAT, TANAKA-KUN?
DON'T TELL THE MEDIA ANYTHING IMPORTANT.
HEY, TANAKA-KUN.
ARE YOU LISTENING?
SWUSH

WHAT?
HUH?
WHY?
...HUH? WELL, YEAH.
ANYWAYS, ARE THESE ALL THE DEATH THREATS WE GOT THIS WEEK?
THERE WERE A LOT MORE OF 'EM LAST WEEK.
YOU'RE NOT HIDING ANYTHING FROM ME, ARE YOU...?
...WEIRD...

AND IT PUTS ON A GOOD SHOW FOR THE MEDIA.
TROOP MORALE RISES IF A REPRESENTATIVE SHOWS UP.
YOU DON'T NEED TO GO TO THE WEEKEND DRILLS AND SHOOTING SESSIONS.
LOOK, TANAKA-KUN. HAVEN'T YOU BEEN TOO HARD ON YOURSELF LATELY?
WE GOTTA TALK.
BOBBY, C'MERE A SEC.
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BOTHERING MY BROTHERS OR ANYTHING ...
BESIDES,

HUH? WHAT WAS THAT?
I'VE FIGURED OUT WHO'S BEEN SENDING THESE LETTERS.
HOW'RE YOU SO SURE?
WELL YEAH, THIS LETTER COMES EVERY WEEK AND IT'S PROBABLY BEING SENT BY THE SAME PERSON, BUT..
YOU KNOW, THE ONE WHO GOT BULLIED A LOT AND STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL...
A CLASSMATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL. I LOOKED HIM UP IN THE SCHOOL REGISTER AND HIS NAME WAS AIZAWA.

WE MET HIM THAT TIME. REMEMBER? THE GUY WE SAT WITH AT THE CAFE.
OH? REALLY?
THE LETTERS STARTED COMING IN THE WEEK WE BROUGHT THE LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE KATSUMI AGENCY.
BUT WHY'D HE WAIT TILL NOW TO START WRITING THESE?
AND THAT WAS NO CHANCE MEETING. HE DELIBERATELY MADE CONTACT WITH ME TO GET HIS REVENGE.
I KNEW SOMETHING WAS FISHY ABOUT HIM,
IT WAS AIZAWA!

THAT... SOUNDS A BIT FAR-FETCHED.
IT'S POSSIBLE HE BECAME AN AGENT TO GET BACK AT ME.
SO AIZAWA'S WORKING FOR AN ENFORCEMENT AGENCY?
W-WAIT A SECOND, THAT GUY WITH THE GLASSES IS IN THE KATSUMI AGENCY, RIGHT?
I'M NOT GONNA FUCKING LAY BACK AND TAKE IT ANYMORE- I'M MAKING THE FIRST MOVE!
DON'T GET PISSY WITH ME WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW SHIT!
SO MOVE YOUR ASS AND FIND OUT WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON!

SO DO YOUR FUCKING JOB! NAB HIM OR KILL HIM!
YOU'RE MY BODYGUARD, AND THERE'S A SUSPICIOUS GUY LURKING AROUND!
I'LL CHECK IT OUT...
ALRIGHT.
...A-
HERE'S THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS.

THE MAN CLAIMS HIS FRIENDS TAUNTED HIM FOR FAILING THE MILITARY SERVICE PHYSICAL EXAMS AND WANTED TO PROVE HIS OWN COMBAT ABILITY...
IN THE WARD 6 SHOPPING DISTRICT A MAN WENT ON A STABBING SPREE, KILLING TWO AND PLACING THREE IN CRITICAL CONDITION
HOWEVER THE ENEMY SPOKESMAN CONTINUES TO RAISE THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECOND WAVE OF HOMELAND BOMBINGS...
IN THE FRONT LINES A WEEK-LONG CEASE FIRE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED, DURING WHICH OUR COMRADES ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION OF WITHDRAWING FROM WARDS 4, 5 AND 6
TODAY, ACTIVISTS FROM THE TANAKA FACTION BEGAN A STREET PETITION FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT CODE, AND HAVE ALREADY GATHERED 20,000 SIGNATURES.
STAY TUNED! WE'RE BRINGING YOU UP TO A FURTHER... AFTER A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS!

IT'S DARK OUTSIDE AGAIN...
AND ALL WE DID TODAY WAS SORT OUT FILES...
SO?

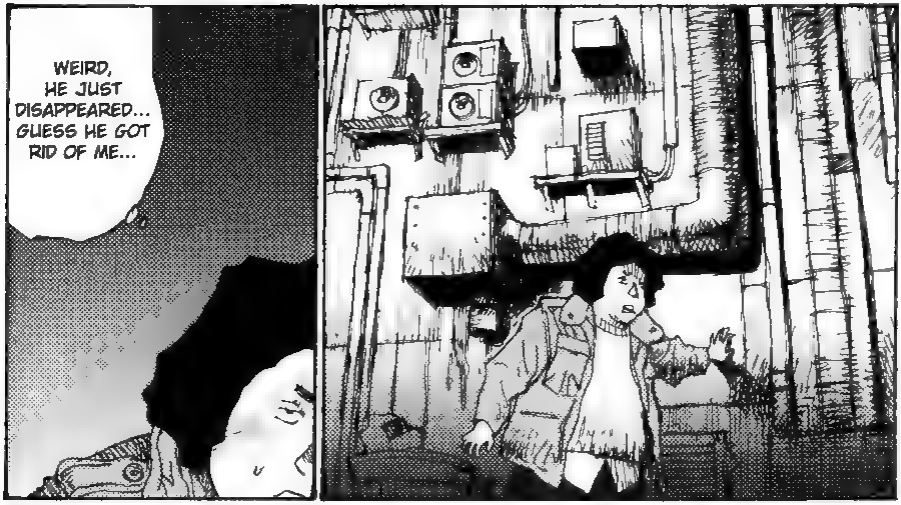
YES, WE HAVE CONFIRMATION. AIZAWA WORKS AS A CITY OFFICIAL IN HIS HOMETOWN. WE'VE CONTACTED HIM DIRECTLY
YOU'RE CERTAIN THAT GUY IS TANAKA-KUN'S CLASSMATE, AIZAWA?
ALRIGHT
HE'S JUST GOTTEN WAY TOO PARANOID LATELY.
SO TANAKA-KUN WAS WRONG AFTER ALL. THE CAFE THING WAS JUST A COINCIDENCE.
GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO TAIL HIM.
SEARCH HIS PLACE FIRST.
ZZT
TANAKA-KUN'S NOT GONNA BE HAPPY UNLESS I FIND OUT MORE...
PROBLEM IS, THE KATSUMI AGENCY'S PERSONAL DATA SECURITY IS TOO TIGHT, AND I CAN'T GET ANY BACKGROUND INFO ON HIM.

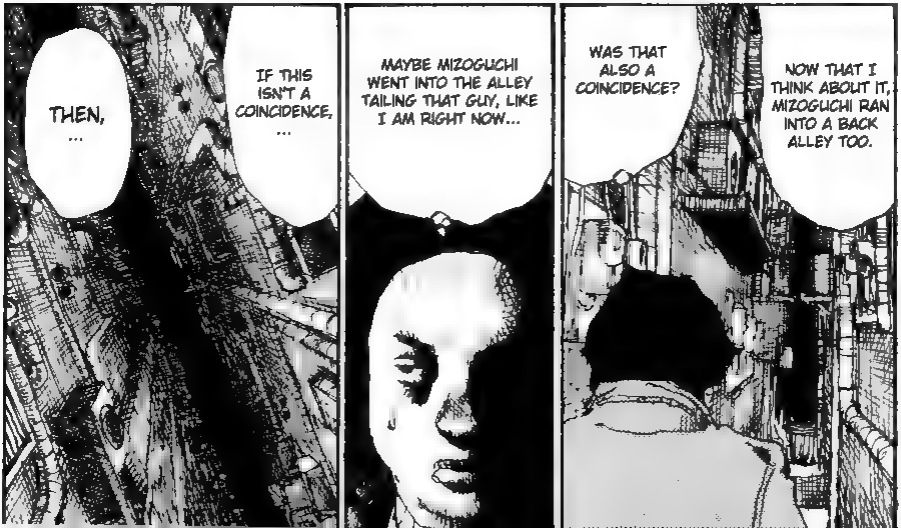
CAN'T GET ANY CLOSER THAN THIS.
HE LOOKS DEFENSELESS, BUT HE'S GOT HIS RADAR ON FULL BLAST
ARE ALL PROXIES LIKE THAT? OR IS HE JUST SPECIAL?

I'VE NEVER HAD THIS KINDA FEELING BEFORE
HE'S PROBABLY THE SPECIAL ONE.
I KNEW HE WASN'T NORMAL THE FIRST TIME I LAID EYES ON HIM.
BUT GETTING CURIOUS LIKE THIS IS JUST PART OF THE JOB
I KNOW IT'D BE BETTER JUST TO LEAVE HIM ALONE.

WONDER WHY.
THERE'S A LOTTA COPS IN THIS AREA...
NAME WAS MIZOGUCHI...
OH YEAH- PROXY FROM THAT KATSUMI AGENCY KILLIN' ONE OF THE COPS...
SWUP
JUST COINCIDENCE?
SO HE ALWAYS WALKS BY THE SPOT WHERE THAT WHOLE THING HAPPENED.
AH

DAMN IT.
SHOOT.
I LOST HIM.


WEIRD, HE JUST DISAPPEARED... GUESS HE GOT RID OF ME...


THEN, ...
IF THIS ISN'T A COINCIDENCE, ...
MAYBE MIZOGUCHI WENT INTO THE ALLEY TAILING THAT GUY, LIKE I AM RIGHT NOW...
WAS THAT ALSO A COINCIDENCE?
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, MIZOGUCHI RAN INTO A BACK ALLEY TOO.

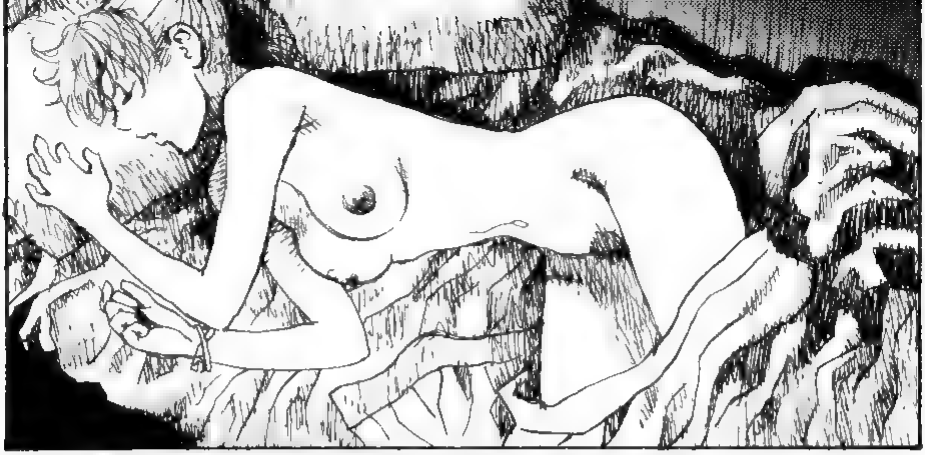
IT'S
A TRAP.

HICK.
TIIIME!

WHAT?
YOU TOLD ME TIME OUT, SO I'M WAITING.

I JUST SHOT THE GUN ON INSTINCT!
I-I'M SORRY! I HAD NO INTENTION OF HARMING YOU!
PLEASE FORGIVE ME!
SO I WASN'T FEELING YOUR VIBE VERY CLEARLY...
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO DISTANCE MYSELF FROM OTHERS LATELY.
OH... SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS.
.....
I WAS ABOUT TO DISPOSE OF YOU.
TERRIBLY SORRY.

DISPOSE.. ?
DI...
QUITE TROUBLESOME ...
REALLY,



Chapter 72
Resignation

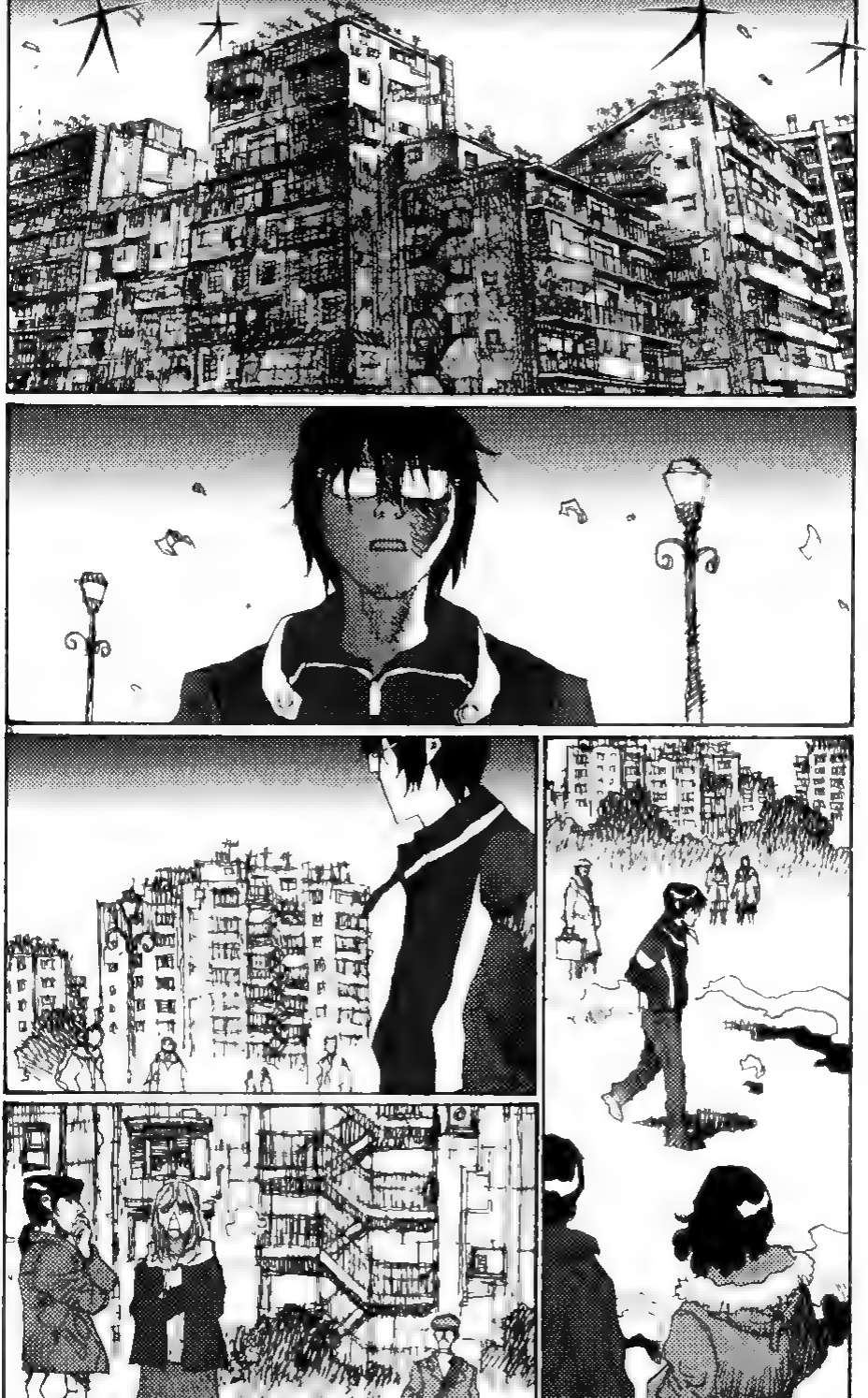
KEIKO.
OH, HIROSHI? WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

I DON'T THINK SO.
REALLY-?
JUST THOUGHT IT WAS AWFULLY QUIET...
...NOTHING,
FOLLOWING THE SHORTENING OF THE DEFENSE LINES, SUPPORT FOR THE CABINET HAS FALLEN SHARPLY, AND FURTHER ACTIONS MAY...
HOWEVER, THE ARMY HAS NOT SHOWN SUPPORT FOR THESE PLANS, AND REMAIN AT ODDS WITH THE OTHER ALLIED FORCES.
SHORTLY AFTER THE ARMISTICE, THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO SHORTEN THE DEFENSE LINES IN FAVOR OF STRENGTHENING THE COMBAT FRONTS,

NOT A BUZZING FLY OR A RINGING PHONE.
YES, ONLY AROUND US.
WITH EVERYTHING ELSE GOING ON IN THE WORLD-
SEE, IT'S ONLY QUIET AROUND US.
THE QUIETNESS IS PROOF THAT ALL IS WELL.
NOW EVEN I AM ABLE TO FIT IN WITH SOCIETY.
THERE'S NO MORE NEED FOR LIES AND DECEPTION.
ALL THANKS TO THE REFORMS I CARRIED OUT.
NOW WE JUST NEED TO QUIT THIS LINE OF WORK WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT.
WE'VE STRUCK A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN US AND THE WORLD.

THEREFORE,
Letter of Resignation
IN THAT SENSE, I THINK THE QUIETNESS PROVES THAT THE TIME HAS COME
FIRST, WE MOVE TO A DIFFERENT PLACE.
WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?
WE CAN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.
I'LL BE SUBMITTING THIS TODAY. THAT WAY,
I CAN THINK ABOUT WHAT NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN ORDER TO SPEND MY TIME WITH KEIKO AND MOTHER MORE WISELY.
YOU SEE? BY TAKING THESE KINDS OF STEPS,
I'LL GET A JOB WITH FLEXIBLE WORK TIMES. THAT WAY WE WON'T HAVE TO KEEP MOTHER IN A FACILITY.
ONCE WE FIND A NEW PLACE, WE BEGIN SEARCHING FOR WORK... THERE'S NO RUSH, NOW THAT WE HAVE THE MONEY.
I BELIEVE THERE ARE MORE SUITABLE ENVIRONMENTS OUT THERE FOR THE THREE OF US.

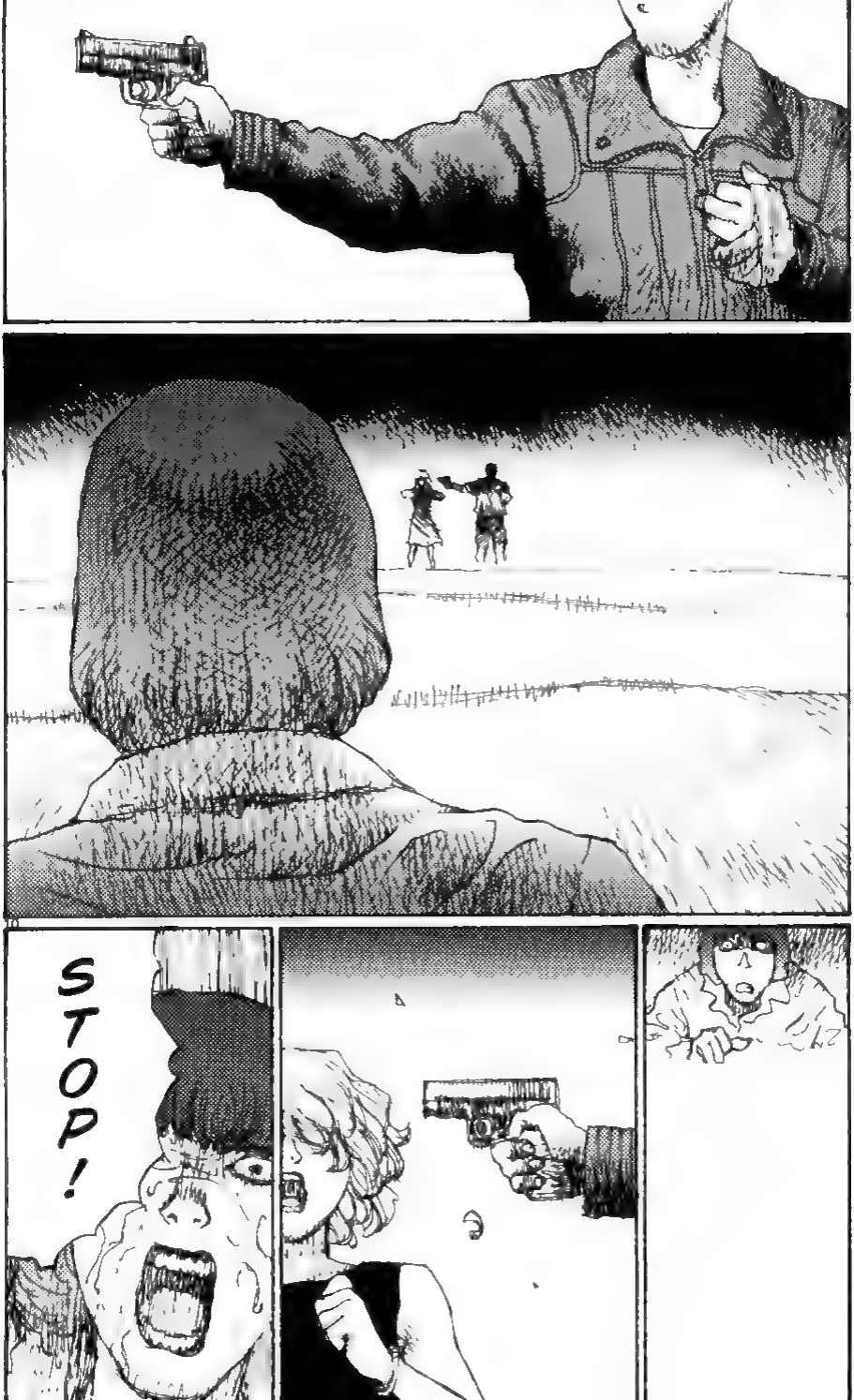
I'M GOING TO CHECK ON MOTHER, SO I'LL BE A LITTLE LATE.
YOU'LL BE HOME BY 9:00 AGAIN, RIGHT?
WE HAVEN'T HAD CURRY IN A WHILE. YOU LIKE CURRY, RIGHT KEIKO?
I KNOW-
I'LL BE WAITING.
...YEAH.
LIKE ALWAYS.



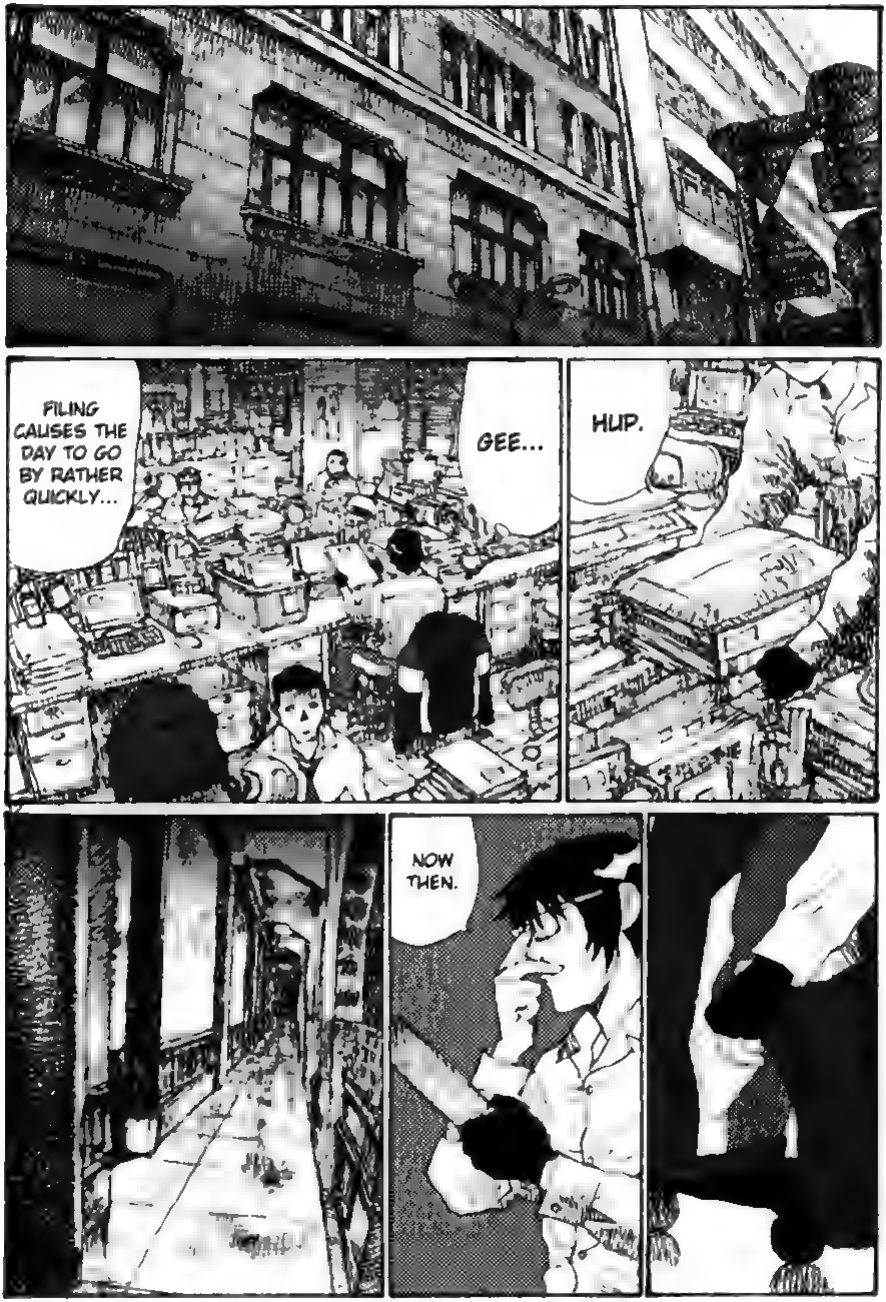
WHAT IS THIS FEELING...?

HUFF.
FUCK-!
I CAN'T FIND THAT BRACELET!
MOM...

YO-KO...
NO...
IT'S YO-KO!
I'M COMING OVER...
I CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING!
WHAT IS IT, I CAN'T HEAR YOU!


STOP!

...
A DREAM.


FILING CAUSES THE DAY TO GO BY RATHER QUICKLY...
GEE...
HUP.
NOW THEN.

Letter of
Resignation

SWUP

THIS DIRTY LITTLE SLIP OF PAPER.

WHAT IS THIS.

EVEN A PRESCHOOLER CAN TELL FROM SEEING THIS OBJECT.
THAT SORT OF THING.
I'M RESIGNING FROM THIS AGENCY.
TO GIVE A CONCISE EXPLANATION.
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE AGENCY? DO YOU ONLY CARE ABOUT YOURSELF?
YOU'RE REALLY CLUELESS, AREN'T YOU.
WHAT I'M ASKING IS, WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO RESIGN AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
THIS IS THE PERFECT TIMING. I CAN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY.
NOW'S THE TIME FOR ME TO QUIT DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?
I ONLY CARE ABOUT MYSELF.
YES.

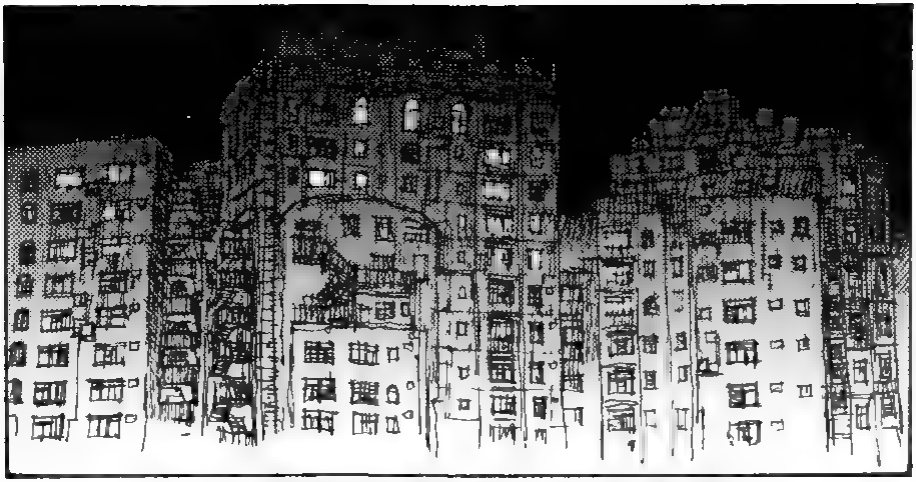
BEING LUGGED AROUND BY YOU IS WHAT ENABLED ME TO PULL A STUNT LIKE THIS...
BUT YOU SEE,
WELL... I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU WOULD BE UPSET ABOUT MY ACTIONS.
THAT'S WHY I'VE BROUGHT THE LETTER TO YOU, AND NOT THE DIRECTOR. SO YOU CAN SAVE FACE.
SO I DO OWE YOU A MILLIMETER OF GRATITUDE, MS. HIGUCHI.
I WON'T STOP YOU FROM QUITTING.
MORONIC.

YOU'LL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR YOUR DUTIES UNTIL THEN.
THUP
Letter of resignation
HOWEVER, I'LL ONLY ACCEPT THIS RESIGNATION IN ONE WEEK'S TIME. THERE'SA LOT OF PAPERWORK THAT STILL NEEDS TO BE PROCESSED.
THAT'S ALL.
AND THIS ONE ISN'T JUST MY MIND...
...THAT FEELING AGAIN.

TICK
DAMN- I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED TO CARRY ALL THIS AT ONCE.
MUST RECOUP.
I CAN'T SEE IN FRONT OF ME.
KIMMM
TO MS HIGUCHI
I JUST SUBMITTED MY RESIGNATION.
THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME.
ARE YOU ON LATE DUTY TODAY?
MR. KANO.
OH.
BUT MY FORMAL DEPARTURE WON'T BE FOR A WEEK.
HUH?

I SEE...
.....
THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE
NOT TO WORRY.
S-SO... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
GOODBYE.
FIRST MR. MIZOGUCHI, AND NOW MR. KANO... EVERYONE'S GONE NOW.
SO COLD.

WOULD YOU LIKE A FLOWER-
FLOWER-
4 TOMATOES, 6 ONIONS.
SPINACH, AND...
500 GRAMS OF CURRY BEEF.
2 BAGS OF CARROTS.
1 BAG OF POTATOES.
NEXT CUSTOMER PLEASE-



CHECKING ON MOTHER TOOK LONGER THAN I ANTICIPATED.
FINALLY HOME.

NOW THEN...

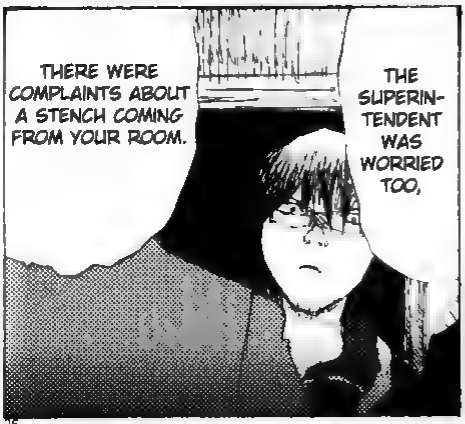
OH... LOOK,
THE GUY FROM THAT ROOM IS BACK.

OH, THERE HE IS.
CAPTAIN... THE MAN IS BACK-
GEEZ- WE'VE BEEN WAITING ON YOU LIKE, FOREVER.
WELCOME HO-ME.

WHY DID YOU ENTER MY ROOM WITHOUT INVITATION?
WHO ARE YOU?
WE WERE SOOO WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
YOUR OFFICE SAID YOU'D ALREADY GONE HOME.
YUP. THANKS A LOT
CAPTAIN, LAB WORK AND STERILIZATION ARE FINISHED.
WE CONDUCTED A SEARCH WHILE THE ROOM WAS EMPTY
WE'RE FROM THE POLICE, YOU SEE...
AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN EMPTY? KEIKO MUST'VE BEEN HERE.
EXCUSE ME-
STERILIZATION? WHAT STERILIZATION?

YES... SHE WAS HERE, BUT...
WE CARRIED HER OVER TO THE STATION, SO SHE'S NOT HERE ANYMORE.
DO YOU RECALL A MAN NAMED SUZUKI...? LIVED IN THE ROOM NEXT DOOR? WE GOT A CALL FROM HIS WIFE.
WE BUSTED THE GUY ON ROBBERY LAST WEEK.
HE WAS ACTING REAL SUSPICIOUS SO WE ASKED HIM A FEW QUESTIONS.

AND THAT'S HOW WE FOUND MS. KEIKO.
AND WE ENTERED THE ROOM LIKE HE TOLD US,
SO YOU KNOW, HE SPIT THE STUFF ABOUT MS. KEIKO.


THERE WERE COMPLAINTS ABOUT A STENCH COMING FROM YOUR ROOM.
THE SUPERIN-TENDENT WAS WORRIED TOO,

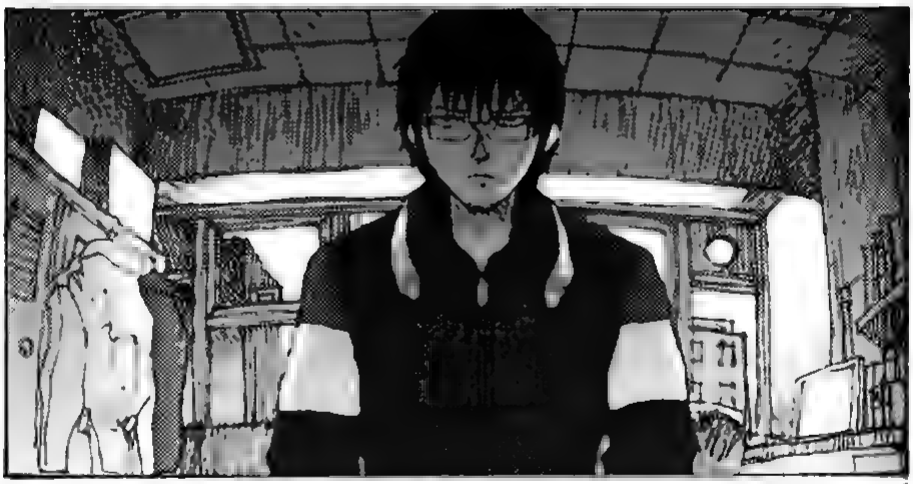
WE DID HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENT LOOKING ON...
!
SURE, WE DIDN'T HAVE A WARRANT OR ANYTHING, BUT...

CREAK ---
I'M AMAZED YOU WERE ABLE TO CONTINUE LIVING IN THIS SMELL-

I'M STARVING-
DID YOU GET THE STUFF FOR THE CURRY, HIROSHI-?

THIS
FEELING
...

HER ADOPTIVE FATHER.
HER BODY'S GOING TO BE PICKED UP BY A PERSON FROM THE ORPHANAGE.
Chapter 73: Warning



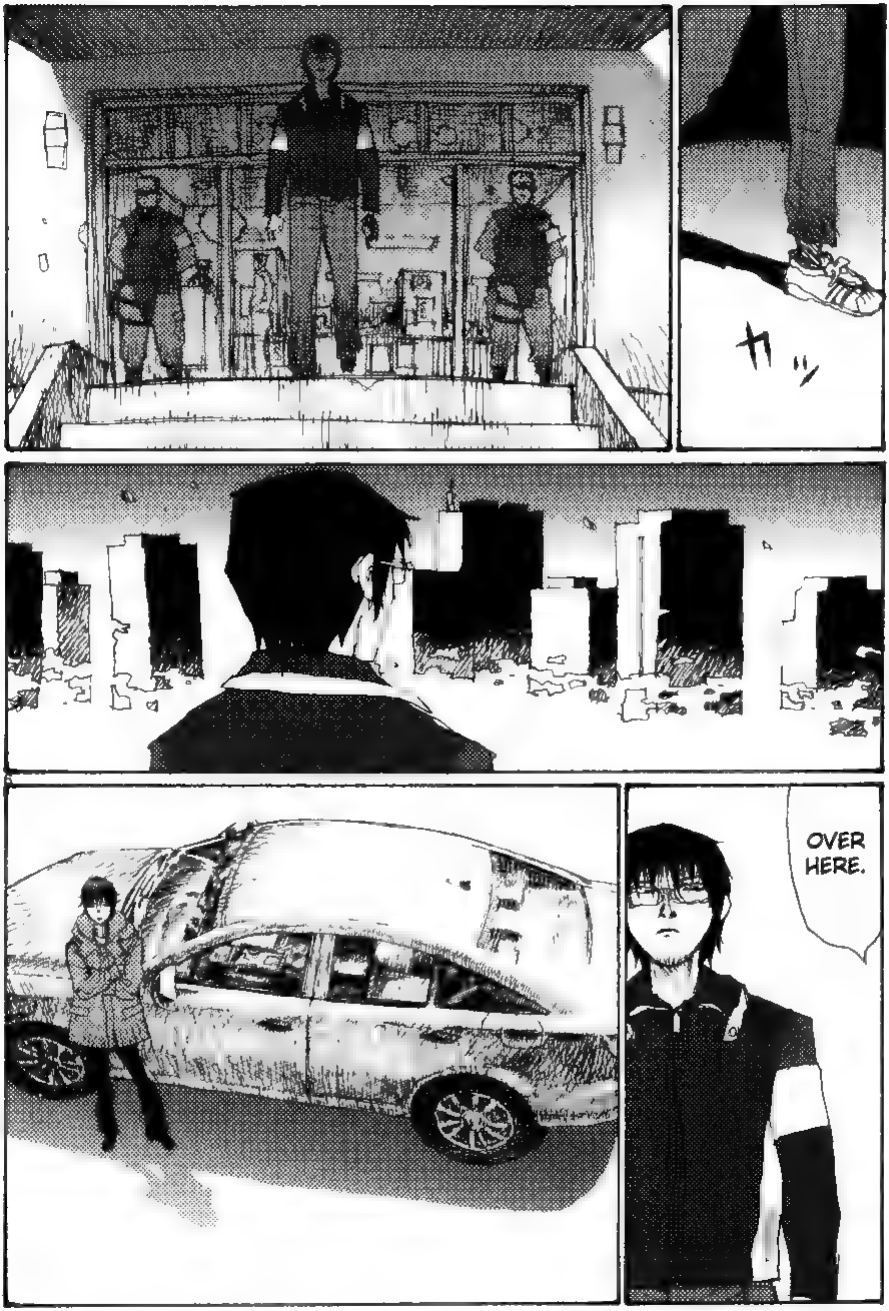
WHAT ORPHANAGE?
ORPHANAGE?

SHE WAS IN AN ORPHANAGE UNTIL SHE MET YOU.
HER FATHER ABANDONED HER WHEN SHE WAS AN INFANT, AND HER MOTHER'S DEAD.
YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT? THOUGHT YOU LIVED WITH HER FOR A LONG TIME.
THAT'S WHY YOU KEPT HER IN THE ROOM THIS WHOLE TIME, RIGHT?
BUT, SINCE THAT ISN'T THE CASE...
IF YOU TWO'D BEEN REGISTERED, WE'D HAVE YOU PICK HER UP...
WASN'T AWARE OF THAT.
OH.
BY THE WAY, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT SUZUKI?

WHAT ABOUT HIM?
HE'S AN EX-CON, SO HE'LL BE IN AT LEAST 20 YEARS. NO PAROLE.
BUT IF YOU SHOW UP IN FRONT OF THE JUDGE, THEY'LL SHORTEN UP THE SENTENCE.
A VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT.
SHOW UP? FOR WHAT.

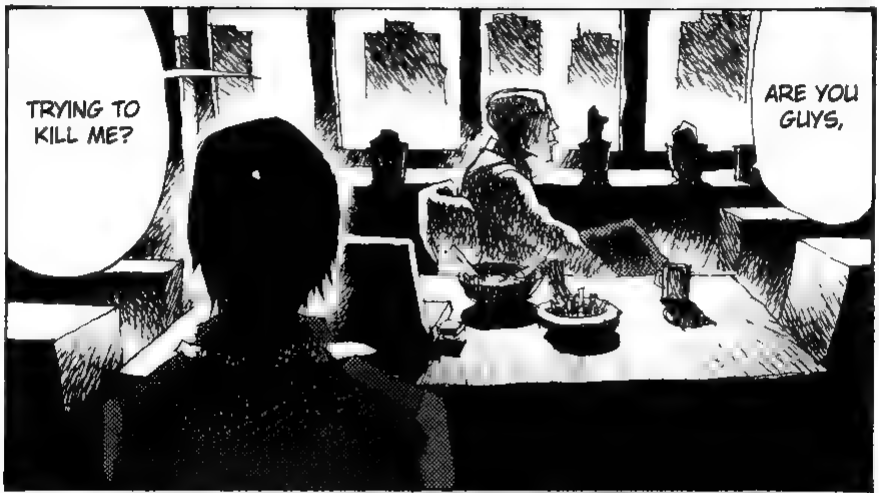
IF YOU DO IT YOURSELF, IT'LL BE REVENGE FOR NO COST. TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE, RIGHT?
YOU'RE A PROXY, RIGHT?
ABSOLUTELY
WHAT ABOUT AN ADOPTIVE FATHER? DOES THERE HAVE TO BE A MARRIAGE?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT-
HE CAN'T APPLY FOR A VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT
BUT HEY, MR. KANO ISN'T A FAMILY MEMBER.
HAH-HAH. GOOD POINT. SO WHAT'RE WE GONN DO?
SHE DOESN'T HAVE ANY, REMEMBER?
RELATIVES CAN APPLY TOO, CAN'T THEY...?
THEN WE NEED TO FIND THE BIOLOGICAL FATHER. NO WAIT.

VENGEANCE ENFORCEMENT, HUH?
SO THIS ONE ISN'T PART OF THE JOB?
THEN WHY AM I DOING IT?
FOR KEIKO?
FOR MYSELF?
WHO'S THE TARGET FOR THIS JOB?
HOW DID IT GET LIKE THIS?


カツ
OVER HERE.

THESE PAST FEW DAYS...
WE'VE BEEN BUSY.
YOU WERE PLANNING ON RETIRING IN A WEEK, ANYWAYS.
YOU'RE ON A LAYOFF FOR NOW. I ACTUALLY WANTED TO FIRE YOU, BUT-
YOU THINK THIS IS FUNNY?
WHAT.

DO YOU EVEN REALIZE HOW MUCH TROUBLE YOU'RE IN WITH THE AGENCY ABOUT THIS WHOLE THING?
I'M NOT HELPING. I'M ON A LAYOFF.
I WOULDN'T MIND BEING FIRED.
LOOK, I TOLD YOU- WE'RE BUSY. WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.
SO WE HAD OUR OWN PLANS FOR THIS SORT OF THING...
YOU WERE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL, BUT THE PHANTOM KILLING DID IMPROVE THE AGENCY'S STANDING,
NO BLEMISHES ON YOUR RECORD, EITHER.
GO OUT NICELY, AND YOU GET A RETIREMENT CHECK AND UNEM-PLOYMENT BENEFITS,
YOU KNOW-
I HAVE A MILLIMETER OF RESPECT FOR YOU TOO,


TRYING TO KILL ME?
ARE YOU GUYS,

WELL- EITHER WAY, I GOT NOWHERE ELSE TO RUN.
NO POINT IN SEEING THINGS WORSE THAN THEY ALREADY ARE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE.
A WEEK? RETIREMENT CHECK?
I'M QUITTING IN A WEEK. I'M GETTING A RETIREMENT CHECK AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.
HIGUCHI TOLD YOU ABOUT THE SITUATION, RIGHT?
UNTIL YOU KILL KEITA TANAKA.
YOU'RE KEEPING THIS JOB,
DOESN'T MATTER.
NOT INTERESTED-
TOTALLY ...
OH, THAT GUY...
TANAKA?

IT'S WAY PAST TIME FOR THAT. ONLY THING LEFT IS TO WAIT AND SEE HOW THINGS PLAY OUT.
HELL NO. THINK ABOUT THE PRICE WE'VE PAID.
YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST STEP DOWN AFTER ALL THIS?
WORK, MURDER, WAR, LOVE, ENFORCEMENT, THEY'RE ALL THE SAME.
I TOLD YOU, EVERYONE AROUND YOU IS INVOLVED.
SO KEIKO WAS PART OF THAT PRICE YOU PAID?
PRICE?
YOU'RE NO PIZZA DELIVERY BOY.
ESPECIALLY THE WORK YOU'RE DOING.

LISTEN,
THAT WON'T DO ANY GOOD.
AND YOU'RE GONNA LEAVE IT AT THAT?
AND IT'S STILL IN THE PROCES OF EVOLVING.
YOUR LIFE'S TOTALLY CHANGED EVER SINCE YOU BECAME AN EN-FORCEMENT PROXY.
THINK ABOUT IT.
YOU'RE GOING TO KILL KEITA TANAKA.

GACHUK

AH-
WELCOME HO-ME.

WHAT'S WRONG?
HEY- WHERE WERE YOU THIS WHOLE TIME?
HUP.
WHY'D YOU MAKE ME WAIT SO LONG?
...NOTHING
HEY, I'M HUNGRY.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
3-4
NOT THAT THERE WERE ANY PROBLEMS.
THE POLICE. THEY ASKED ME SOME QUESTIONS.

HERE'S THE DEAL.
HEY, YOU LISTENING?
UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PLAN OF MINE, ...
...WAS A FAILURE.
I HADN'T REALIZED IT AT ALL,
BUT YOU'RE NOT KEIKO. YOU'RE JUST FRIEND PRETENDING TO BE HER.

YOU'RE PROOF OF THAT.
I HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL.
ONLY TO FIND OUT IT'S ALL JUST ANOTHER PART OF THE DREAM.
AS ALWAYS, I WAKE UP THINKING THE DREAM IS OVER,
NOT ME, AT LEAST.
NOTHING.
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?
SO?
IN FACT, I'VE REGRESSED, NOW THAT I'VE LOST KEIKO.
ARE THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO LEAVE.
YOU,

TRUE...
YOU NEVER SAID STUFF LIKE THAT BEFORE...
I DON'T NEED YOU ANYMORE.
BECAUSE,
WHY'S THAT?
I ACTUALLY MAY HAVE CHANGED A LITTLE BIT...
IN THAT SENSE,
FROM NOW ON.
BUT... YOU'RE OKAY WITH BEING ALONE?

I CAN'T HAVE YOU EXIST ANY LONGER.
IN ORDER FOR ME TO LIVE ALONE,
UNDERSTAND?
IF THIS GOES ON, I FEEL LIKE THE REAL KEIKO IS GOING TO LOSE HER IMPORTANCE.
AND THERE'S NO POINT IF YOU TAKE HER PLACE AND INTERACT WITH ME.
YOUR EXISTENCE IS INCONSISTENT WITH KEIKO'S DEATH.
I HAVE TO FACE REALITY AND NOT TAKE COMFORT IN YOU.
BASICALLY, I CAN'T BECOME DEPENDENT ON YOU.

YOU WEREN'T HERE ON YOUR OWN ACCORD. YOU WERE HERE BECAUSE I WANTED YOU.
THERE'S NO POINT IF HIROSHI DOESN'T NEED ME.
OKAY-
MUCH EARLIER.
I SHOULD'VE REALIZED ALL THIS,
YOU WANT AN ORANGE?
HEY HIROSHI,

HERE.
THANKS.
YEAH... I'LL TAKE THAT SMALL ONE RIGHT THERE.
I'M GOING.
OKAY,

HIROSHI.
BYE,
...

GACHUK

TICK
大辞典
08:20

TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK

NOW THEN.
MOTHER.
WANT ANYTHING TO EAT?

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